AGRI-NEWS

AL 1691

January 7, 1985

For immediate release

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January 7, 1985

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Feed freight assistance program

Alberta's minister of agriculture has announced a program to help reduce the costs of transporting feed to areas affected by the 1984 drought but not covered by the livestock drought assistance program.

LeRoy Fjordbotten said the new program will apply to forage purchased and transported between July 1, 1984 and June 30, 1985. Producers must assume the full cost for the first 25 miles (40 km). Beyond that the rates of assistance will be as follows:

Hay and straw: 20 cents per ton per mile for the first eligible 100 miles (160 km) and 10 cents per ton for each additional mile up to a maximum of $30 per ton.

Cubed or pelleted roughage: 13 cents per ton per mile for the first eligible 100 miles and 6.1 cents per ton for each additional mile up to a maximum of $30 per ton.

Silage: nine cents per ton per mile for the first 100 eligible miles and 4.1 cents per ton for each additional mile up to a maximum of $12 per ton.

The program applies to producers with the same type of livestock covered by the livestock drought assistance program: beef and dairy cows, female sheep and goats and PMU mares owned August 1, 1984. The maximum assistance is $25 per eligible cow or mare and $5 per sheep and goat.

The feed freight assistance program will be implemented on a county basis. Both the local agricultural development committee and the county council or agricultural service board must submit a request in order to participate. The minister of agriculture will make the final decision on the areas to be included.

- (cont'd) -

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Feed freight assistance program (cont'd)

Application forms and brochures describing the program should be available by mid-January.

"This year's early winter left some farmers with no option -- either they had to buy extra feed, or sell some of their breeding stock," Mr. Fjordbotten said. "I'd prefer to see them keep breeding stock and maintain viable herds."

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Ron Weisenburger
Beef cattle and sheep branch
Alberta Agriculture
427-5083

or

Judd Bunnage
Livestock drought assistance program
Alberta Agriculture
427-5079 /422-5300

January 7, 1985

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Severe drought areas determined

Livestock producers in the areas designated as severe under the drought assistance program can expect to receive their supplementary cheques in late January or early February.

Eligible producers do not have to apply for this supplement; payments will be made to those who have already applied under the program. Producers in the severe drought areas will receive $18 per eligible cow, heifer and PMU mare, and $4 per eligible ewe and doe goat.

LeRoy Fjordbotten, Alberta's minister of agriculture, has outlined the severe drought area boundaries as follows:

The northern boundary of the severe area, starting at the Saskatchewan border, is the north side of Township 27 in Ranges 1 to 6, the north side of Township 28 in Ranges 7 and 8, the north side of Township 29 in ranges 9 to 11, and the north side of Township 30 in Ranges 12 to 28. At that point the line turns south to the north boundary of the MD of Rocky View. The remainder of the north boundary is the north boundary of the MD of Rocky View between Ranges 29 and the west side of that municipality.

In general the north boundary can be described as a line just south of Highway 9 between the Saskatchewan border and Hanna, then west to a point several miles east of Didsbury, then south to the north border of the MD of Rocky View and finally west along that border.

The western boundary is the west side of the MD of Rocky View and the MD of Foothills, the west side of Range 2 between Township 11 and 15 in ID No.6, and the

- (cont'd) -

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Severe drought areas determined (cont'd)

west side of the MD of Pincher Creek. The line then follows the Waterton National Park boundary to the Montana border.

The southern boundary is the Montana border, while the eastern boundary is the Saskatchewan border.

The federal-provincial livestock drought assistance program will provide nearly $30 million to help maintain the breeding herds and flocks of approximately 9,500 drought-affected producers in southern and central Alberta.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Ron Weisenburger
Beef cattle and sheep branch
427-5083

or

Judd Bunnage
Livestock drought assistance program
427-5079 /422-5300

For immediate release

Government honors pork insurance plan guarantee

The Alberta government will pay a guaranteed loan of $10 million under the Alberta pork producers' market insurance plan, LeRoy Fjordbotten, Alberta's minister of agriculture, announced December 19.

The plan was put into effect in 1981 to assure pork producers of reasonable returns during periods of low prices. Under the plan producers paid premiums of up to four per cent of their gross hog sales. At the time the plan was introduced, the government contributed $10 million as a start-up grant, and made provision for another $10 million in loan guarantees that could be called upon if needed.

By last April payouts to producers had exceeded premiums and the $10 million in guarantees was required to sustain the plan. By the end of September the fund was exhausted and producers faced the prospect of continuing to pay premiums without receiving any benefit.

Mr. Fjordbotten said the government recognizes the difficulties many hog producers face, and that by paying out the outstanding loan balance, the government hopes to reduce the insecurity and instability in the industry.

The government will not put any more money into the plan, the minister added. "Producers must realize that the marketplace will have to dictate returns until a firm commitment is reached on a national red meat stabilization program," he said.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Fred Schuld
Head, pork industry branch
427-5320

For immediate release

Alberta firms receive assistance

Three firms, two located in Provost and one in Wainwright, have been offered financial assistance totalling $117,539 to establish new facilities and expand or modernize existing ones.

The assistance is provided under the Canada-Alberta Nutritive Processing Assistance Agreement, a joint project of the federal and provincial governments.

Provost Packers Ltd. has invested more than $279,000 to expand and modernize its abattoir. The firm will use $55,856 from the Nutritive Processing Agreement to help defray the costs of new equipment and the building expansion.

Bouma Meats Ltd. will use $34,784 from the Nutritive Processing Agreement to assist with the construction of its new facility in Provost. The total cost of the project is estimated at $174,000.

Both projects are expected to more fully serve the local meat market.

Linfair Foods Ltd., operating as Wainwright IGA, has established a new in-store bakery with the aid of a $26,899 offer of assistance from the Nutritive Processing Agreement. The firm has invested more than $89,000 in equipment for the bakery, which employs two people.

Since 1975 the Nutritive Processing Agreement has provided more than $27.3 million to food processors in rural Alberta. The program was recently extended for one year; applications for assistance will be taken until September 30, 1985.

Further information on the Nutritive Processing Agreement is available from Dr. Jim Wiebe at 427-4287.

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For further information please contact:

Dr. Jim Wiebe
427-4287

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For immediate release

Lethbridge area firms receive assistance

Two firms in the Lethbridge area have been offered funds from the Nutritive Processing Agreement to help establish new facilities and expand or modernize existing facilities.

Bow Island Dehy Ltd. will put $435,336 in Nutritive Processing Assistance toward the cost of building an alfalfa cubing plant near Bow Island. The new plant is expected to cost $1.8 million and create 13 jobs. The plant will produce about 35,000 tonnes of cubes annually, of which 65 to 70 per cent will be exported to Japan.

Taber Feeds Service Ltd. will use $16,862 from the Nutritive Processing Agreement to upgrade its feedmill pelleting operation through the addition of a computerized control system. The system will monitor and control the flow rate of the dry feed, and the ratio of molasses, water and steam; and monitor all equipment associated with the pelleting operation. The total cost of the new system will be more than $105,000.

The Nutritive Processing Agreement, which is operated jointly by the federal and provincial governments, has provided more than $27.3 million to food processors in rural Alberta since 1975. The program was recently extended for one year; applicants now have until September 30, 1985 to apply.

Further information on the agreement is available from Dr. Jim Wiebe at 427-4287.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Dr. Jim Wiebe
427-4287

January 7, 1985

For immediate release

Early winter cuts vegetable harvest

The early onset of winter left a large portion of Alberta's 1984 vegetable crop frozen in the ground, and will mean severe financial hardship for many growers.

Jim Patterson of the Alberta Fresh Vegetable Marketing Board says that growers report losing 940 of the 3,279 acres of vegetables they planted last spring. The loss in the carrot crop alone could run to $1.1 million, with growers' reports showing that 450 of the 720 acres planted are still in the ground.

Over half the rutabaga crop and one-quarter of the cabbage crop were also lost.

On November 1, the supplies of vegetables in storage were only about half what they were in 1983, says Fred Boyce, special commodities analyst with Alberta Agriculture. Despite the small crop, prices for the major storage vegetables are similar to or lower than a year ago.

The crop loss will have little effect on consumers except that they will have to buy more imported produce this winter, Mr. Boyce says. Large supplies of carrots in eastern Canada and an increased fall carrot acreage in California will mean adequate supplies for Alberta consumers. The current growing conditions in the United States are good, and a repeat of the substantial price increases of last winter is unlikely.

Alberta's 1984 vegetable acreage was about one per cent higher than the 1983 acreage.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Fred Boyce
427-5383

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Potato demand strong

Alberta potato growers should have no difficulty selling their 1984 crop at prices similar to or slightly higher than last year's, says Fred Boyce, Alberta Agriculture's special commodities analyst.

Variable weather conditions reduced the yield of the province's 1984 potato crop by more than four per cent from 1983, but an increase in acreage resulted in total production that was six per cent higher than in 1983.

Despite the larger crop, the potatoes in storage on November 1 were estimated at 3.363 million hundredweight, nine per cent less than one year ago. Mr. Boyce says the lower stocks resulted from exceptionally high demand from potato processors and good demand for table potatoes and out of province shipments. He expects seed potato sales to increase significantly during this crop year.

Canada's 1984 potato crop is estimated to be seven per cent greater than the 1983 crop. Despite the increase, prices have remained firm in most major production areas. The exception, says Mr. Boyce, is in the east where large Quebec potato crop was dumped into markets at prices only half of those of last year.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Fred Boyce
427-5383

January 7, 1985

For immediate release

New federal fuel rebate program

Farmers will be eligible for a rebate of 4.8 cents per litre on the fuel they buy for off-highway use in commercial activities between December 1, 1984 and January 1, 1987.

The rebate was announced by the federal minister of finance in his economic statement November 8.

Nabi Chaudhary, a transportation economist with Alberta Agriculture, says that the department of national revenue is advising farmers to keep their fuel receipts until they receive information and rebate application forms in the mail later in the first quarter of this year.

The new rebate is in additon to the 1½ cents per litre excise tax refund program already in effect.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Nabi Chaudhary
427-5395

January 7, 1985

For immediate release

Better Buy Alberta products tagged in stores

From now on it will be easier to identify Alberta-processed foods in many supermarkets.

A total of 110 stores in Edmonton and Calgary now carry red shelf tags to identify Alberta products. The tags bear the slogan *Better Buy Alberta,* which has been used for several years by the Alberta Food Processors' Association (AFPA).

Paul Murphy, executive director of AFPA, says he hopes all major retail stores in Edmonton and Calgary will eventually carry the shelf tags.

Efforts have also been made to extend the *Better Buy Alberta* message to rural consumers. Last fall Alberta Agriculture, in cooperation with AFPA, introduced the shelf tags as part of a pilot project in Wetaskiwin, Ponoka and Rimbey. The program could be expanded to other rural areas, says Mr. Murphy.

For the new year AFPA plans a television advertising campaign. The marketing sector of Alberta Agriculture supports AFPA programs designed to heighten consumer awareness of *Better Buy Alberta* products.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Paul Murphy
453-3587

January 7, 1985

For immediate release

Computer model predicts economics of drainage

The production and resource economics branch of Alberta Agriculture would like to hear from farmers interested in trying a new computer program to determine whether soil drainage is economically feasible.

Ron Desjardins says the branch has developed a computer model to predict the economic benefits of drainage both on dryland and irrigated land, with and without salinity problems. The model can be used with a microcomputer to show how much a farmer can afford to spend on drainage given the type of soil, equipment, likely increases in yield or possible changes in the crop mix.

Staff of the production and resource economics branch recently used the computer model to study the economics of drainage in several regions of Alberta. They found that subsurface drainage to reduce soil salinity in irrigated areas was almost always worthwhile. Subsurface drainage to correct salinity on dryland was not economically justifiable except over the long term and in areas which get a great deal of precipitation. Both subsurface and surface drainage of sloughs and potholes was generally feasible.

Mr. Desjardins says he is now willing to use the computer model to assist individual farmers who are considering drainage projects. He can be contacted at the Production and Resource Economics Branch, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6; phone 427-4026.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Ron Desjardins
427-4026

January 7, 1985

For immediate release

Canola and barley production meetings

In looking ahead to next year's crop, producers are always seeking ways of increasing yields and dollar returns.

A series of seminars planned for the northwest region will provide the latest in barley and canola production information. Bill Chapman, Alberta Agriculture's regional crop production specialist at Barrhead, says the seminars are being sponsored jointly by Alberta Agriculture, the Alberta Canola Growers' Association and the Western Barley Growers' Association.

Canola meeting

This day-long session to be held at Morinville, January 16, will present information on factors affecting canola growth, varieties, pests and diseases, fertilizer placement, harvesting and storage.

The cost is $10 per person including lunch; advance registration is requested. John Hladky, the district agriculturist (DA) at Morinville (939-4351), or Bill Chapman at 674-8258 can provide more information about this meeting.

Barley seminars

Barley production with high yield in mind is the theme of a two-day seminar to be held at Josephburg January 23 and 24. On January 23 top producers will discuss their production practices; you'll also hear about barley diseases, local yield data and fertility. The discussions January 24 will cover varieties including recently licensed feed varieties, marketing options, the economics of high yield and a session on malt barley selection with a representative from Canada Malting Company.

- (cont'd) -

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Canola and barley production meetings (cont'd)

An added feature of the two-day program will be a luncheon speaker on family communication the first day, and communication breakdown and the law the second day.

The daily registration fee for this meeting is $10 per person or $15 per couple, which includes lunch. Further information is available from DAs Dave Ward in Sherwood Park (464-4222), Elmer Bittner in Leduc (986-2251) or John Hladky in Morinville (939-4351).

Maximizing barley production is the theme of a one-day seminar to be held in Westlock January 30 and Spruce Grove January 31. Both meetings will deal with fertilizer placement, production practices, new varieties, barley leaf diseases, disease control trials and intensive barley management as practised by a pedigreed seed grower. The registration fee is $10 per person including lunch. Advance registration is requested. To register or get more information please contact one of the following DAs: Rod Carlyon or Rick Bjorge at Westlock (349-4465), Patrick Hawkings at Stony Plain (963-6101), or Bill Chapman.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Bill Chapman
674-8258

January 7, 1985

For immediate release

Straw and chaff treatment seminar at Stettler

In times of hay shortages and high feeding costs, farmers may be considering feed alternatives. One practice which is popular in Saskatchewan and may now receive greater attention here is collecting and treating chaff with ammonia.

"Once regarded as waste, chaff has turned out to be a feed that can compose a major part of a cow's winter ration," says Andy Birch, Alberta Agriculture's district agriculturist at Stettler. He has organized a one-day seminar to provide more information about treating and using chaff. The seminar will be held Monday January 28 at the Memorial Hall in Stettler.

Chaff itself doesn't have enough protein for wintering cows and needs to be supplemented. An abundant, inexpensive source of non-protein nitrogen is ammonia. Ammoniation can increase the digestibility of low quality roughages such as straw and chaff, but even more important, says Mr. Birch, it can double and triple crude protein levels from four per cent to 11 per cent. Some producers have successfully wintered beef cows on chaff alone and found other advantages in addition to its economy: chaff is easily mechanized, easy to feed and reduces weed problems.

At the seminar two Saskatchewan farmers will talk about their experiences with treating and feeding chaff, while Jack Kernan of the Saskatchewan Research Council will discuss ammoniation techniques for straw and chaff. Alberta Agriculture's regional livestock specialist from Red Deer, Dale ZoBell, will talk about feeding and supplementing straw rations. Lee Moats of Saskatchewan Agriculture will look at chaff handling systems and their costs.

The seminar will begin at 10 a.m. The fee is $10 per person or $15 per farm couple, and includes lunch. The deadline for registration is January 23. To register please phone

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Alberta Agriculture's district office at Stettler at 742-4481 or mail your cheque to Alberta Agriculture, Bag 600, Stettler, Alberta, TOC 2LO. Cheques should be made payable to the Agricultural Education Trust Account.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Andy Birch
742-4481

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January 7, 1985

For immediate release

Winter wheat production seminar at Stettler

Despite the drought last year, winter wheat in Alberta managed to achieve respectable yields, which ranged from 20 per cent to 50 per cent more than spring wheat.

That is one just reason more farmers are considering adding winter wheat to their cereal grain production. In addition to better yields, farmers like winter wheat because it can reduce herbicide costs and soil erosion, and spread out the harvest season.

Alberta Agriculture's district agriculturist at Stettler, Andy Birch, has organized a seminar on winter wheat production for January 31.

The topics will include cultural practices, fertilizer and herbicide selection and application, seeding and variety selection, and marketing and diseases. A producer panel will talk about problems, failures and successes with winter wheat. Among the other speakers are Blair Shaw, Alberta Agriculture's regional plant industry supervisor at Lethbridge, and Dr. Gaudet, a plant pathologist with Agriculture Canada.

The seminar will begin at 1:00 p.m. at the Provincial Building in Stettler. The deadline for registering is Monday January 28. Pre-registration is advised because seating is limited. Anyone who wants more information about the seminar can call the Stettler district office at 742-4481.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Andy Birch
742-4481

January 7, 1985

For immediate release

Toxicology section head appointed

Dr. Byron E. Beck has been appointed head of the toxicology section of Alberta Agriculture's reference laboratories branch.

In announcing the appointment, Dr. Jim Pantekoek, the head of the branch says, "Dr. Beck is a recognized expert in clinical toxicological problems and brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience." The toxicology laboratory carries out analysis to permit diagnosis in cases where chemical poisoning of livestock is suspected.

Dr. Beck has been with Alberta Agriculture since 1970 and was previously the head of the animal section in the pathology branch.

After graduating from the school of veterinary medicine at Colorado State University in 1961, Dr. Beck had a private practice in Lethbridge for three years. He then spend four years in New Zealand in a dairy practice, followed by a year as head of the animal disease laboratory for the state of Idaho. Since joining Alberta Agriculture Dr. Beck has worked on many toxic problems in cattle, including those associated with accidents in the petrochemical industry.

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For further information please contact:

Dr. Byron E. Beck
436-8904

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This Week

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January 14, 1985

For immediate release

New farm loan guarantee program

On January 8 LeRoy Fjordbotten, Alberta's minister of agriculture, announced a farm loan guarantee program, which will be administered by the Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC).

The program will provide operating loan guarantees of up to $100,000 of new loan advances to farmers who show they have a reasonable chance of success, and who cannot get financing elsewhere. These guarantees will be issued for up to one year with a possible one-year renewal during the first two years of the program, and will bear interest at the lender's prime rate.

The farm development guarantee program will begin January 21, but the actual guarantees will not be available until ADC is satisfied with the applicant's farm management plan. The onus will be on the applicant to supply financial information and projections. Applicants must be willing to accept financial counselling and adjust their management practices.

Applications will be taken under the program until December 31, 1987.

"An essential element of the program is that existing commercial credit will remain in place," said Mr. Fjordbotten. "Borrowers will be encouraged to discuss their situations with their lenders."

The ADC farm development guarantee will apply only to new operating loan advances and cannot be used to replace or reduce financing by banks and other commercial lenders. This will ensure that the funding advanced is used for the current year's operations and not to pay out existing bank debts, said the minister.

ADC may modify its security requirements to meet individual situations if a farm plan demonstrates adequate repayment ability.

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New farm loan guarantee program (cont'd)

The guarantee will be available to farmers whose net worth doesn't exceed $500,000 and whose equity in the operation doesn't exceed 50 per cent of the value of the assets. "These equity levels ensure the assistance will go to family farms with the greatest need," said the minister.

Farmers who want to find out if they're eligible under the program should contact an ADC loans officer.

ADC and Alberta Agriculture will offer additional counselling services to help farmers analyze their situations and develop workable plans. ADC's counselling will involve in-depth analysis for farmers who are in immediate financial difficulty.

The department of agriculture will offer financial counselling with emphasis on assistance to farmers who are in or soon will be in arrears, and want to find ways of improving their situations.

By next fall the department will provide intensive financial training through workshops followed up with on-farm assistance in accounting.

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For further information please contact:

Harold Hanna
Agricultural Development Corporation
Camrose: 679-1301

or

Wilson Loree
Farm business management branch
Olds: 556-4240

For immediate release

300 per cent lamb crop challenges producers

In order to make money most sheep producers will have to double their present productivity, says Alberta Agriculture's sheep specialist. But, says John Knapp, we have the technology and breeds to make it possible, and the current trend toward heavier lambs is going to help.

"In most situations there's no money in sheep unless you can wean at least a 200 per cent lamb crop, and if you're serious about making money you have to aim for 300 per cent," says Mr. Knapp. While this is a far cry from the average of 120 per cent now weaned by Alberta producers, Mr. Knapp points out that several decades ago the dairy and poultry industries increased their production on that scale, and have since survived and prospered.

At present production levels, however, the average Alberta lamb producer can't carry any debt. "In order just to cover cash costs producers who wean a 120 per cent lamb crop must own their land, buildings and flocks outright," says Mr. Knapp.

That calculation is based on a 105-pound lamb which is now the norm in Alberta. There are signs that in future producers may be able to market heavier lambs and thus increase their returns. Lambs heavier than 130 pounds are being sold in the western United States without discount, and research at the Alberta Ram Test Station suggests most breeds can produce lean, desirable lambs weighing 150 pounds. A 200 per cent lamb crop marketed at the heavier weight would double the return per ewe and reduce the break-even point by a 50 per cent lamb crop weaned.

"When the day of heavier lambs without penalty comes -- as it must -- the sheep industry will look a lot more attractive," says Mr. Knapp.

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300 per cent lamb crop challenges producers (cont'd)

In the meantime, the challenge to the sheep industry takes the form of trying to achieve a 300 per cent lamb crop. "Productivity at that level doesn't mean abandoning pasture or the concept of the ewe as a ruminant but it does mean accelerating to 1.5 lamb crops per year," Mr. Knapp says.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

John Knapp
948-5101

January 14, 1985

For immediate release

Lamb producers surveyed

Most lamb producers are all too familiar with the flood of lambs that usually hits the market in June, bringing prices down.

Now the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission and Alberta Agriculture are surveying producers to forecast the flow of fat and feeder lambs to market each month of this year. This information will give producers an idea of the peak periods and enable them to adjust their breeding and feeding programs to spread out the number of lambs marketed and perhaps minimize price reductions.

In early January surveys were mailed to growers on the commission's mailing list and distributed through district offices. Chuck Sterling, head of the statistics branch, says the results should be available by the end of February.

Mr. Sterling adds that the survey will be of greatest use to producers if a large number of questionnaires are returned. If this producer survey is like last year's, however, the response should be very good.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Chuck Sterling
427-4011

January 14, 1985

For immediate release

Conference looks at changing food market

Last year the megastore made its appearance in Alberta. Twice the size of conventional supermarkets, these stores enable shoppers to buy everything from videotape to dry cleaning services along with their weekly groceries.

The impact of these stores -- and other current issues facing food processors and retailers -- will be discussed at the fifth annual Western Canadian Economic Conference on the Food Industry, March 4 and 5 in Edmonton.

The speakers will include Bob Kinnie, president and chief executive officer of Canada Safeway Ltd.; Talaat Abdel-Malek of the faculty of management at the University of Calgary; and Kenneth Hardy of the school of business administration at the University of Western Ontario. Sally Hall of the Consumers' Association of Canada will also address the conference.

The conference is sponsored by several organizations including Alberta Agriculture, and is co-ordinated by the Rural Education and Development Association (REDA).

For brochures or more information about the conference please contact REDA at 14815 - 119 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5L 2N9, or phone 451-5959.

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For further information please contact:

John Melicher
REDA
451-5959

or

Cliff Wulff
Alberta Agriculture
427-4241

For immediate release

Alberta best market for nursery industry

A study just completed for Alberta's nursery growers confirms what many have long suspected: there is ample room for the industry to expand, and some of the best opportunities are right here in Alberta.

For example, the study estimates that Alberta growers supply less than 15 per cent of the trees and shrubs used for landscaping in Alberta. Realistically, says the study, this could be increased to 37 per cent. What's needed is for Alberta's nursery industry to take a more aggressive marketing approach aimed at replacing imports.

Susan Kitchen of Alberta Agriculture's market development sector says the study provides the industry's first comprehensive assessment of its size, volume and value. It shows that in 1983 the sales of shrubs, trees and plants in Alberta totalled more than $27 million. Nurseries and related businesses employed the equivalent of 1,725 people full time, with a gross payroll of more than $11 million. Nearly 2,200 acres were used to grow nursery stock.

The report, which was funded jointly by the Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association (LANTA) and Alberta Agriculture, also recommends ways of improving sales of Alberta stock. Among them are field days, tours, seminars and province-wide promotion.

While the provincial market offers the best potential for sales, the report also suggests that the nursery industry pursue export opportunities in areas where Alberta's hardy stock offers an advantage: Alaska, Montana, Oregon and Idaho, for example. Ms. Kitchen says that representatives of LANTA and Alberta Agriculture will meet soon to consider ways of implementing the findings of the study.

-30-

For further information please contact:

Susan Kitchen
297-8452

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For immediate release

Grain tour to west coast

Alberta Agriculture's regional economist at Fairview has arranged a tour to Vancouver for producers who want to see how their grain is handled and exported.

Harvey Glasier says that one of the trip's highlights will be a visit to a grain terminal where participants will take a complete tour and see how grain is sampled, graded and cleaned. The group will also visit a container terminal; a bulk handling facility for coal; and the offices of the Vancouver Port Corporation, for a presentation on how the port is operated. The group will tour rail facilities throughout the Greater Vancouver area including maintenance shops for diesel engines and hopper cars.

Mr. Glasier has scheduled meetings with representatives of the Canadian Wheat Board, the Canadian Grain Commission, a terminal company, the railways and the grain workers' union.

On the lighter side, participants will visit the Sports Hall of Fame and have the weekend free in Vancouver.

The cost of the tour is $375 per person. This covers air fare, bus transportation in Vancouver, three meals and three nights' accommodation. Accommodation for the weekend will be available for an additional $22.50 per night.

The tour will leave Grande Prairie Tuesday March 12 and return Monday March 18. It is limited to 45 people and the fee must be paid by February 20. More details about the tour are available from district agriculturists in the Peace region. To register for the tour, please phone Harvey Glasier at the Fairview regional office at 835-2291.

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For further information please contact:

Harvey Glasier
835-2291

January 14, 1985

For immediate release

Transportation department changes permit regulations

Vehicle operators no longer need dimensional permits to move grain bins over secondary highways and rural roads in Alberta for distances of 60 kilometres or less.

That change in the regulations was announced by Marvin Moore, Alberta's minister of transportation.

Operators who want to move grain bins more than 60 kilometres will still need permits; these are available at no charge from vehicle inspection stations or the motor transport branch in Red Deer (phone 340-5293). Another change in the regulations states that grain bins higher than 5.3 metres must be moved along routes approved by local utility companies. Bins wider than 4.85 metres must be accompanied by a vehicle with flashing warning lights. Operators moving grain bins less than 4.85 metres wide must use roads where vision is not restricted by curves and hills.

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For further information please contact:

Dick West
Alberta Transportation
340-5430

For immediate release

March 1 deadline for tree pruning course

March 1, 1985 is the deadline for registering for Alberta Agriculture's annual tree pruning courses. They will be held simultaneously at the Alberta Horticultural Research Center at Brooks and the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre at Oliver (near Edmonton) March 5 and 6.

The courses are designed mainly for people who work with trees, but are open to anyone interested in tree maintenance and beautification.

The courses will cover pruning techniques recommended for shade, ornamental and fruit trees, and will give participants practice in pruning. Other topics include insect and disease control as they relate to pruning, tree structural growth, tree and shrub hardiness and tree varieties recommended for Alberta.

The number of participants will be limited to 30 in each location. If there is sufficient interest, an attempt will be made to accommodate extra people in another course at either of the two locations immediately after the scheduled courses.

The registration fee for the course is $10, and it must be paid by March 1.

Application forms or further information about the courses is available from Herman Oosterhuis at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre, R.R. 6, Edmonton, Alberta, T5B 4K3 (telephone 973-3351) or Brendan Casement at the Alberta Horticultural Research Center, Brooks, Alberta, TOJ OJO (telephone 362-3391).

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For further information please contact:

Herman Oosterhuis
Oliver
973-3351

or

Brendan Casement
Brooks
362-3391

January 14, 1985

For immediate release

Soil and water management specialist appointed

Dennis A. Roll has been appointed soil and water management specialist with Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch. His appointment is announced by the head of the soil and water conservation section, John Hermans.

Mr. Roll will coordinate the branch's on-farm water management programs. One area of activity will be assisting agricultural service boards and farmers with farmland development and reclamation projects including slough consolidation and peatland development.

Mr. Roll has 12 years' experience in irrigation with Alberta Agriculture. In 1973 he joined the department as an irrigation specialist at Brooks, working on farm irrigation development and management. In 1982 he moved to the regional office at Airdrie, to supervise farm irrigation services in Regions 2 to 6.

Mr. Roll was raised on a farm at Hays in the Bow River Irrigation District, and in 1968 graduated from the University of Alberta with a B.Sc. in agriculture specializing in soil science.

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For further information please contact:

Dennis A. Roll
422-4385

For immediate release

District home economist appointed at Airdrie

A new district home economist (DHE) has been appointed to Alberta Agriculture's office at Airdrie. Laura Lee Allison-Billings is transferring from the Coronation office where she has been the DHE for three years.

In announcing the appointment, Shirley Myers, head of the home economics branch, says that Ms. Allison-Billings will emphasize programming in record keeping, nutrition education and the development of 4-H leaders.

Ms. Allison-Billings grew up on a mixed farm east of Red Deer, and in 1981 graduated from the University of Alberta with a B.Sc. in home economics specializing in family studies. She has worked with the home economics branch at Bonnyville and Lethbridge in addition to Coronation. Over the past three years a large portion of her work involved leadership training and the management of family resources.

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For further information please contact:

Laura Lee Allison-Billings
948-5152

January 14, 1985

For immediate release

District home economist appointed to Morinville

Judy Shipley-Smith is Alberta Agriculture's new district home economist (DHE) at Morinville. Her transfer from the Edson office is announced by Shirley Myers, head of the home economics branch.

From the Morinville office Ms. Shipley-Smith will provide services related to home economics for the residents of the Municipal District of Sturgeon. She plans to continue programming in financial management, and will work closely with the district's strong and active 4-H clubs.

Ms. Shipley-Smith was born in Regina and graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in 1980 with a B.Sc. in home economics. She joined Alberta Agriculture as a DHE-in-training at the Drumheller office in 1981 and in May 1982 was appointed DHE at Edson.

Her appointment to Morinville is effective January 14, 1985.

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For further information please contact:

Judy Shipley-Smith
939-4351

For immediate release

Food scientist appointed

Susan Lutz has been appointed food scientist at Alberta Agriculture's Food Processing Development Centre at Leduc. Her appointment is announced by Dr. David Schroder, head of the centre.

Ms. Lutz will work in the areas of food product development and technology transfer to assist Alberta food processors to become more competitive through the use of new technologies and development of products and processes.

A graduate in food science at the University of British Columbia, Ms. Lutz has previously worked for the federal health protection branch and the William A. Shade Company Ltd. in Richmond, B.C. Ms. Lutz has six years of experience with product development in the fruit, dairy and bakery industries.

The Food Processing Development Centre, which opened last December, is equipped with pilot and laboratory scale food processing and testing equipment and a computer-based information service. The centre's staff will work with industry either at the centre or in the processing plant on technological developments or to solve problems.

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For further information please contact:

Susan Lutz
986-4793

Correction

The list of coming events issued with Agri-News December 31 contains an error in the location of the Alberta Grazing Management Symposium being held February 13. The correct information is:

Alberta Grazing Management Symposium. . . . . February 13
Elks' Hall
Vermilion, Alberta

AGRI-NEWS

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January 21, 1985

For immediate release

This Week

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For immediate release

Grasshopper outbreak may continue

Southern Alberta may suffer heavy grasshopper infestation again this summer, according to a forecast released by the research station at Lethbridge.

The important word there is "may," says Mike Dolinski, supervisor of entomology with Alberta Agriculture. Cool, wet weather when the grasshoppers hatch in late May and early June could cut down their growth and survival rate, and thus reduce the hazard. That would also give crops a head start, and older plants are better able to withstand grasshopper attack.

Mr. Dolinski says Alberta Agriculture staff will monitor the situation starting in May and issue weekly reports on grasshopper population development. This information will assist in ensuring that sufficient quantities of insecticide will be on hand if spraying becomes necessary.

The grasshopper forecast is based on the number of adult grasshoppers counted late last summer by agricultural fieldmen. The number of adults at that time of year gives a good idea of the number of eggs laid and thus the grasshopper population for the following year.

The forecast for 1985 rates large areas of the municipalities of Warner, Lethbridge, Willow Creek and Wheatland as severe to very severe. The amount of land rated severe or very severe is four times as great as last year. North of Drumheller no severe outbreaks are expected, although warm, dry weather could lead to moderate problems in the Wainwright-Provost area.

This is the sixth major grasshopper outbreak in Alberta since annual surveys began in 1932. Mr. Dolinski says that such outbreaks usually last for three years, and 1985 is the

- (cont'd) -

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Grasshopper outbreak may continue (cont'd)

second year of the current outbreak. In 1984 warm, dry weather and clear skies led to high survival rates and rapid growth among grasshoppers. Worst hit were areas where rainfall was only one-half to three-quarters of normal.

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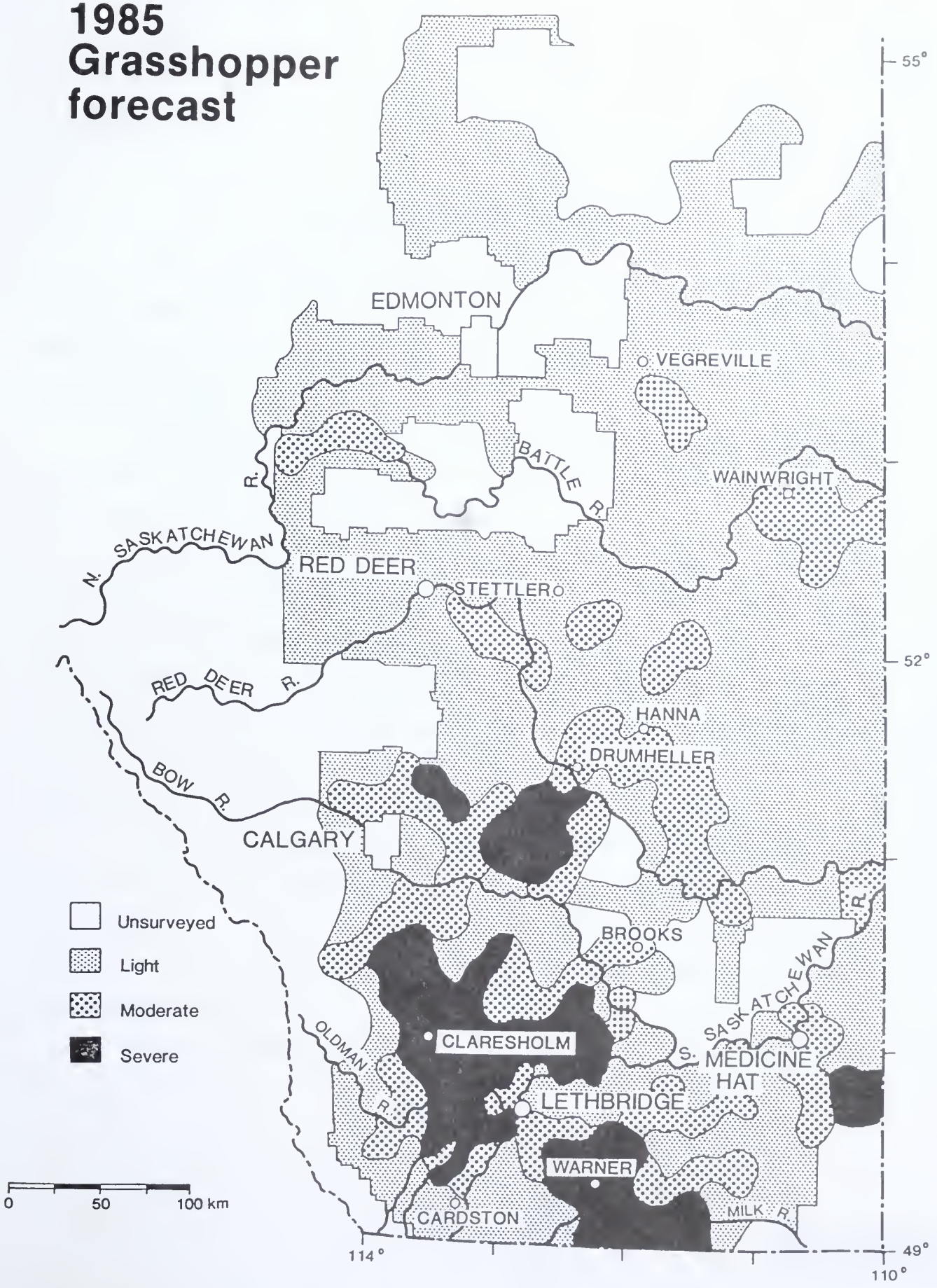
For further information please contact:

Mike Dolinski
427-5339

The map on the following page shows the 1985 grasshopper forecast.

1985 Grasshopper forecast



January 21, 1985

For immediate release

Accent '85 to be held at Lethbridge

With the reduced 1984 grain crop and good export shipments, there's no question producers will be able to market all the grain they have. 1985, however, is another matter. Will a larger crop find a ready market? What about competition from the U.S. and the EEC? What's going to happen to prices?

Market analysts will attempt to answer those questions – along with others farmers might raise -- at Accent '85, Alberta Agriculture's annual grain and oilseeds outlook conference, to be held March 5 and 6 at the Lethbridge Lodge.

The conference program is divided into two half-days. It begins the afternoon of March 5 with a forecast of world weather conditions and crops for 1985-86, given by Richard Shields, an agro-meteorologist with Sparks Commodities Inc., in Memphis. Pat Moncrieff of the Bank of Montreal in Toronto will outline the general economic outlook. Bob Roehle of the Canadian Wheat Board will discuss the world wheat situation and price outlook for 1985-86. Then Lynn Malmberg, grains analyst for *Grainews,* will speak on the domestic wheat situation and outlook. The evening will wind up with a banquet and speaker.

The program for March 6 starts with the world feedgrain situation and price outlook as seen by Maurice Brannan of FAR-MAR-CO INC., Kansas City. Parry Dixon of Archer Daniels Midland Co. of Decator, Illinois will look at the world oilseed situation and price outlook for 1985-86. Paul Cassidy of Palliser Grain in Edmonton will discuss the Canadian canola situation and outlook.

The program will end with a luncheon, which will also have a speaker.

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Accent '85 to be held at Lethbridge (cont'd)

Registration forms for Accent '85 are available from district agriculturists or the market analysis branch in Edmonton. The registration fee is $60 and includes the conference, meals and a copy of the proceedings. Copies of the proceedings are available for $15 each. The deadline for registering is February 25.

More information about Accent '85 is available from the Market Analysis Branch, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6; phone 427-5387.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Dwayne Couldwell
427-5386

January 21, 1985

For immediate release

Beekeepers delay bee orders

This year Alberta beekeepers have ordered far fewer packaged honeybees than usual from California -- but the reason for the reduction isn't clear, says Don MacDonald, the provincial apiarist.

It may be the low price of honey, or the fact that more producers are overwintering their bees instead of killing them in the fall and importing new bees each spring. Or, says Mr. MacDonald, producers may be delaying their orders because of concern about the tracheal mite, a honeybee pest that's been found in 10 U.S. states. No one knows how the pest might react in Alberta's climate -- it might be harmless. In western Europe, however, the mite has allegedly caused problems with overwintering and honey production, so producers here are understandably wary about importing the pest.

"That's the dilemma," says Mr. MacDonald. "We don't know for sure whether the mite would be a serious pest in Alberta."

Meanwhile, time is running short for anyone who plans to keep bees this summer and didn't overwinter them. Orders have to be placed with bee producers by the end of January. Alberta beekeepers usually import about 115,000 packages of bees from California, which so far is free of the mite.

The mite has caused concern for all beekeepers in Alberta. Those who overwinter bees are afraid of the mite getting into the province, and those who import bees are afraid they might lose their source of supply.

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Beekeepers delay bee orders (cont'd)

The situation illustrates the need for greater self-sufficiency in the industry, says Mr. MacDonald. Pests like the tracheal mite are bound to get into Alberta eventually as long as we import such large quantities of bees. For the honey industry, the development in 1984 of the Alberta bee -- a honey-producing bee that can also overwinter - was a welcome start toward that self-sufficiency.

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For further information please contact:

Don MacDonald
837-2252

For immediate release

Farmers like tile drainage

More than 80 per cent of the farmers who have installed subsurface tile drainage to reclaim saline and waterlogged land would do it again and would recommend it to others, according to a survey completed by the drainage branch of Alberta Agriculture.

The survey was conducted to learn more about drainage practices on irrigated land in Alberta and to evaluate how farmers feel about drainage, says Brook Harker, head of the drainage reclamation section.

Over half the 76 farmers who completed questionnaires believe canal seepage is at least part of the reason their land requires drainage. Only 10 per cent think irrigation practices are a contributing factor. Forty per cent have tried other reclamation methods in addition to tile drainage.

The average drained parcel is reported to be about 23 acres (nine hectares) in size. On the average, drains are installed about 1.2 metres deep and 22 metres apart. About half were installed by trencher, and the other half by the trenchless plow method.

Two-thirds of the respondents say their drainage systems are working as well as or better than they expected. Those who have managed drained land intensively have generally achieved results that were better than they expected.

An equal proportion of farmers -- about one-third each -- believe they will achieve yields that are 60 per cent to 100 per cent of normal on drained land within one to three years, five to six years and nine to 10 years, respectively.

There are currently about 600 tile sites on both irrigated and dryland farms in Alberta.

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For further information please contact :

Brook Harker
329-5159

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Phone: (403) 427-2121

January 21, 1985

For immediate release

Grazing management symposium

In 1982 Ray Olesky decided to try rotational grazing on his ranch near Sangudo. In 1983 he grazed 315 steers on 250 acres, and in 1984 increased to 450 steers on 224 acres.

Mr. Olesky is one of the speakers at this year's Alberta Grazing Management Symposium. The purpose of the meeting is to show how producers can use intensive pasture management to turn out more beef per acre.

Intensive pasture management really means subdividing pasture and moving cattle around, says Ken Lopetinsky, Alberta Agriculture's forage specialist at Barrhead. It's not difficult or expensive, and it makes good economic sense in these days of narrowing profit margins, and grazing land that is increasingly hard to find or expensive.

The Grazing Management Symposium will begin with a presentation by Dr. Stan Parsons of Albuquerque, New Mexico, who will discuss grazing management for production and profit. Bert van Dalfsen of the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Food will talk about fencing with high tensile smooth wire. The program concludes with a producer panel discussion to answer the question, Does intensive pasture management pay?

The dates and locations of the Alberta Grazing Management Symposium are:

Grande Prairie Motor Inn, February 11, 1985

Westlock Inn, February 12, 1985

Elks' Hall, Vermilion, February 13, 1985

Olds College, February 14, 1985

- (cont'd) -

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Grazing management symposium (cont'd)

The registration fee is $15 per person, and the deadline for registering is February 6. Registration forms are available from local forage associations and Alberta Agriculture's district offices.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Ken Lopetinsky
Alberta Agriculture
674-8258

or

Bill Gaugler
Alberta Forage Institute
645-6301

January 21, 1985

For immediate release

How Bill C-7 affects farmers

Anyone involved with tax planning will remember December 20, 1984 as the D-Day of taxation -- the day Bill C-7 became law.

Doug Duff and Merle Good of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch say the bill means four things for farmers: a special RRSP to reduce the tax impact when a farm is sold, clearing up of several problems with estate planning, simpler business considerations for corporate farmers, and increased tax rebates on farm fuel.

Special RRSP deduction

The new bill allows for a special RRSP to be deducted against taxable capital gains of up to $120,000 resulting from the sale of qualifying farm property. The maximum amount eligible is based on the taxable half of a capital gain and is determined by multiplying $10,000 by the number of years a farmer farmed between 1972 and 1983 inclusive. The figure is reduced by any contributions to an RRSP or registered pension plan after 1983.

To qualify, the property must have been owned by the taxpayer or spouse December 31, 1983, and may include farmland, buildings, shares of a family farm corporation or an interest in a family farm partnership.

Farmers who qualify are those who farmed and did not have a restricted farm loss in any year considered, or

- leased farmland to their spouses or children who qualified as full-time farmers
- leased farmland to a family farm corporation or partnership in which they, their spouses or children were involved
- held shares in a family farm corporation or an interest in a partnership in which they, their spouses or children farmed.

- (cont'd) -

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How Bill C-7 affects farmers (cont'd)

Qualifying taxpayers over the age of 71 will be able to deduct the cost of an annuity against the taxable portion of the capital gain.

Estate planning changes

Bill C-7 contains several housekeeping measures to eliminate problems associated with transferring family farms from one generation to the next.

For purposes of a farm rollover, the definition of a child has been extended so that the farm can be transferred to a child who before the age of 21 was under the custody of a farmer but not formally adopted.

A rollover from a child to a parent is now allowed in the event of the death of the child with a surviving parent.

Property eligible for a rollover now includes property leased by taxpayers to a family farm corporation or partnership owned by the taxpayers, their spouse or children. This applies to transfers after December 31, 1983.

Transfers made on the death of a taxpayer after December 1983 can now be made at any amount between the property's adjusted cost base and fair market value. Prior to this change land could be left in the will only at the adjusted cost base. The change means that transfers of farm property after the death of a taxpayer will be similar to sales made while the taxpayer was still alive.

Corporate farms

The small business tax rate in Alberta on the first $200,000 of annual income for corporations will be 20 per cent regardless of the accumulated income. Prior to the changes $1 million of accumulated income triggered a higher rate of tax.

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How Bill C-7 affects farmers (cont'd)

This change, combined with the rule allowing farm property leased to a corporation to be eligible for the farm property rollover, will result in a considerable advantage to the formation of farm operating companies. The farm business management branch staff suggest seeking professional advice in this matter.

Fuel rebates

Farmers will be offered a fuel tax rebate of 4.8 cents per litre on gas and diesel fuel they buy for off-highway use in commercial activities. The rebate will apply between December 1, 1984 and January 1, 1987, but the amount will change annually, so farmers will have to keep tabs on it. The 4.8 cent rebate is in addition to the 1.5 cent per litre excise tax refund already in effect.

While the changes in Bill C-7 are beneficial to farmers, many of the details of the programs aren't yet clear. Mr. Duff and Mr. Good recommend that farmers seek professional advice before implementing any of the new measures.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Doug Duff
556-4240

or

Merle Good
556-4237

January 21, 1985

For immediate release

Take inventory now

Many businesses close for a day or two to take inventory at the end of the year. Taking inventory of a farm business doesn't mean milking or feeding can stop. But taking an accurate count of your assets is just as important for the farmer as it is for the owner of any other business.

December 31, the year-end for most farm businesses, is the ideal day to take inventory, although any time in January isn't too late, says Doug Barlund, a farm management economist with Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch. The longer you wait, however, the less accurate the inventory is likely to be.

"Having a rough idea of bushels of grain or head of livestock isn't good enough," says Mr. Barlund. "Accuracy is important."

Why take inventory? An inventory, or list of everything you own, shows your assets. Subtract your liabilities from that and you'll have your net worth, or equity.

If you tally up inventory every year on the same date, and complete a net worth statement, you'll be able to compare the value of your business from one year to the next. "You may not always like the answers you get, but at least you'll know where you're headed," says Mr. Barlund.

If your equity is higher than last year's you can breathe a sigh of relief. If it isn't, you can start planning to improve it by next year, he suggests.

For help in starting an inventory, Alberta Agriculture offers the Farm Financial

- (cont'd) -

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Take inventory now (cont'd)

Fitness package -- worksheets you can use to evaluate your business now and monitor its progress in the future. Copies of the Farm Financial Fitness package are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices, the publications office in Edmonton or the Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1PO.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Doug Barlund
556-4245

January 21, 1985

For immediate release

Hedges aid in snow control

The abundant snowfall in some regions this winter has again shown how useful well-placed hedges can be in keeping snow from drifting in farmsteads and driveways.

The key to success in using a low hedge as a living snow fence is in placing it properly, says Herman Oosterhuis of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre at Oliver.

As a rule of thumb, a hedge should be placed approximately five times its height away from the area you want to keep snow-free.

In other words, a hedge that grows seven feet tall should be planted approximately 35 feet from the area you want to protect. Snow will accumulate behind the hedge. Planting a hedge right next to a driveway will not aid in snow control, says Mr. Oosterhuis.

Anyone who would like more information about planting hedges to help control snow may be interested in a publication available from Alberta Agriculture. Its title is *Snow and Wind Control for Farmsteads and Feedlots, (Agdex 711-1)* and it's available from district offices or the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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For further information please contact:

Herman Oosterhuis
973-3351

January 21, 1985

For immediate release

Diagnostician appointed to crop lab at Brooks

Tom Krahn, director of the Alberta Horticultural Research Center (AHRC) at Brooks, has announced the appointment of Marilyn Dykstra as diagnostician at the regional crop laboratory at the center. Her major responsibilities will be to diagnose plant diseases, insects and weeds, and carry out extension work.

Ms. Dykstra is a native of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. She obtained her B.Sc. in agriculture from the University of Guelph in 1978 and an M.Sc. from the University of Saskatchewan in 1981. She has worked as a seasonal diagnostician at the AHRC since April, 1981.

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For further information please contact:

Marilyn Dykstra
362-3391

AGRI-NEWS

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THIS WEEK

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January 28, 1985

For immediate release

Funding for seed cleaning plants

No major changes are likely in the provincial government's assistance to seed cleaning plants over the next year, but there's no money for extras, and funding for major upgrading or new plants will continue to be somewhat limited.

At the very most, funding will permit only one new plant and a plant replacement each year, said Morley Douglas, an assistant deputy minister with Alberta Agriculture, at the annual convention of the Association of Alberta Cooperative Seed Cleaning Plants January 18 in Edmonton.

The reason for what may be considered a hard-nosed approach is to make sure that the available money is distributed fairly among Alberta's 77 seed cleaning plants, Mr. Douglas explained. He asked any associations which are thinking about major projects during the next year to let the department know about their plans as soon as possible.

During the past year $2.5 million was spent on upgrading and replacing plants. Of that, the government provided one million dollars, local governments contributed half a million dollars and the associations provided the rest.

Last year the plants cleaned almost 26 million bushels of seed. "High quality, clean seed is the cheapest and one of the most important factors in a farmer's weed control program," said Mr. Douglas.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Morley Douglas
427-2436

January 28, 1985

For immediate release

Preconditioned calves bring premiums

The preconditioned calves sold in Alberta last fall brought premiums averaging 4.67 cents per pound more than ordinary cattle.

In general, these premiums were paid for average quality preconditioned cattle, not just the top livestock, says Terry Church, head of Alberta Agriculture's health management branch. That trend means more money for the average producer. Dr. Church adds that in 1984 there was increased demand for preconditioned calves from local buyers, and continuing strong demand from eastern buyers.

The premiums paid for steers increased on average from 4.50 cents per pound in 1983 to 4.67 cents in 1984. The premiums for heifers increased from 2.43 cents per pound in 1983 to 4.68 cents in 1984.

The number of preconditioned calves sold in Alberta in 1984 increased by more than 50 per cent from the previous year.

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Preconditioned calves bring premiums (cont'd)

Comparison of Prices at Preconditioned and Regular Sales - 1984

Location	Date	Sex	Precond.	Regular	Premium
Ft. Macleod (2117)*	Nov. 29	S	93.42	Not enough numbers to compare	
		H	83.14		
Rocky. Mtn. Hse. (467)	Nov. 30	S	86.46	83.48	2.98
		H	79.27	76.31	2.96
Ponoka (1510)	Dec. 1	S	88.32	84.28	4.04
		H	79.54	75.27	4.27
Gr. Prairie (1365)	Dec. 3	S	84.91	80.36	4.55
		H	74.93	70.91	4.02
Clyde (1655)	Dec. 3	S	88.11	83.32	4.79
		H	78.12	72.15	5.97
Red Deer (685)	Dec. 3	S	88.84	83.75	5.09
		H	80.22	75.08	5.14
Edmonton (851)	Dec. 7	S	86.84	81.96	4.88
		H	78.96	74.97	3.99
Total (8650)		S	88.41	83.74	4.67
		H	79.15	74.47	4.68

( ) Total number sold
*2117 includes 500 Alberta Preconditioned cattle, and 1600 from the Prime Feeders Preconditioning Program

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For further information please contact:

Dr. Terry Church
436-9343

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Phone: (403) 427-2121

January 28, 1985

For immediate release

Blended payment blues

One of the most difficult tasks in preparing a farm net worth statement is to determine the liabilities due within the next 12 months, says Doug Barlund of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch.

The job is even more complex if you have a long-term loan with blended or amortized payments. In order to be accurately recorded on the net worth statement, such debts must be split into the current portion (the amount due within 12 months) and the balance not due (payable over 10 years or more).

The following example shows how to calculate the principal and interest of a blended payment.

Assume it is late December 1984 and you're preparing a net worth statement for your farm business as of December 31, 1984.

You have a $70,000 mortgage taken out in September 1982, amortized over 25 years, with equal payments of $5,072.20 due May 1 and November 1. The interest rate is 14 per cent and the present outstanding debt is $69,290.

At first glance it seems logical to include the current payments ($5,072.20 x 2 = $10,144.40) under the current liabilities section, and the balance ($69,290 - $10,144.40 = $59,145.60) under fixed liabilities. But is this correct?

No. The $10,144.40 includes some principal and a larger portion of interest. If you record the liability as suggested earlier, you will exaggerate the current principal payment due and underestimate the long-term balance not due.

In order to calculate the proper amounts for the current liability and the balance, you need to know the interest rate and the outstanding debt as of the last instalment.

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Blended payment blues (cont'd)

First semi-annual payment

The interest is: $69,290 (principal) x 14% x 6/12 (year) = $4,850.30.

The principal reduction is: $5,072.20 (payment) – $4,850.30 (interest)= $221.90(principal).

Second semi-annual payment

$69,290 – $221.90 (principal) x 14% x 6/12 (year)= $69,068.10 x .07= $4,834.76

The principal reduction is $5,072.20 (payment) – $4,834.76 (interest) = $237.44 (principal).

Principal balance not due

$69,068.10 – $237.44 (principal) = $68,830.65, rounded to $68,831

You then place the current principal due -- $221.90 + $237.44 = $459.34 -- in the current liabilities section of the net worth statement. This amount could be rounded to $460. The principal balance not due, $68,831, is placed in the long-term or fixed liabilities section of the net worth statement.

Accrued interest owing

Remember that the last regular payment was made on the loan November 1, 1984. It is now December 31, 1984, and you owe two months' interest on the mortgage money.

How do you determine the accrued interest, and where do you record it on the net worth statement? Arithmetically speaking:

$69,290 x 14% x 2/12 (years) = $69,290 x .023 = $1,616.76, rounded to $1,617.

This $1,617 would be recorded as the accrued interest in the current liabilities section of your net worth statement.

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Blended payment blues (cont'd)

For more help in determining your net worth, please refer to the publication *Assembling Your Farm Net Worth (Agdex 818-25),* and the Farm Financial Fitness Package, available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

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January 28, 1985

For immediate release

Tax management isn't farm management

Many productive and prosperous farmers use tax management strategies that may harm their long-term financial security, warns Dan Hoodicoff, a chartered accountant at Olds.

A common example of this, he says, is using every available means to minimize taxes. Many farmers use cash tickets to defer income from grain, or buy next year's fertilizer to increase tax deductible expenses, and thereby wind up with little or no taxable income.

These farmers have achieved the goal of paying no tax, but have perhaps not used personal tax deductions which are available only for the specific tax year.

"That is not good tax management -- or good farm management either," Mr. Hoodicoff said in an interview with Craig Edwards of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch.

Focus on a single target -- like avoiding tax -- is not in a farmer's best interest over the long run if other management functions aren't properly considered. Concentrating on tax strategies may lead farmers to mistake tax management for farm business management, resulting in poor decision making.

Mr. Hoodicoff suggests that farmers work more closely with their accountants to improve the decisions on which the long-term profitability and survival of their farms depend. A competent accountant can help farmers plan long-term strategies, says Mr. Hoodicoff. This means, however, that farmers must spend time discussing their whole situation with an accountant instead of just having the accountant file their tax returns.

Another pitfall of using certain tax strategies is that some farmers have increased

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Tax management isn't farm management (cont'd)

their operating and long-term loans to the point where they have weakened their financial position unnecessarily. Potential tax liabilities deferred from one year to the next can build up and create unexpected difficulties in the future. For example, if farmers defer income from last year's grain sales to this year and then have to sell all their cattle this year, their income will be much higher than expected, and they could be taxed at a much higher rate.

"At times it's better management to declare some income, pay some tax and keep some cash in reserve for working capital," says Mr. Hoodicoff.

Another situation he discussed concerned capital investments in machinery. He has seen cases where a farmer couln't use all the available business investment tax credit and capital cost allowance allowed on the purchase of machinery because of earlier tax deferral which decreased the year's taxable income. "Better planning of the farm's situation would take into account both tax provisions and economic factors, and result in a more secure financial structure for the business," Mr. Hoodicoff said.

Strategies that minimize income taxes aren't always best for the survival and expansion of the business. Tax planning should be considered along with many other factors to make better use of money and other resources.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Craig Edwards
556-4248

January 28, 1985

For immediate release

1985 Shelterbelt program

The Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre at Edmonton is gearing up for its annual spring distribution of trees and shrubs under the shelterbelt program.

Confirmation sheets have just been mailed to people who will receive stock in 1985, listing the number and kind of trees they will receive. If you're one of these people and have changed your mind about wanting trees, please let the centre know as soon as possible to avoid waste.

As usual, the demand for shelterbelt trees exceeded the centre's supply, says Herman Oosterhuis. Lilac, honeysuckle and pine were in particularly short supply. This year the centre received about 8,000 orders for trees, and will not be able to supply the full orders as requested by about 1,500 of these applicants. These people will each receive a back order listing the trees the nursery can't supply this year, and will be given priority for 1986. These applicants must, however, return a signed copy of the back order, confirming they do want trees next year.

In 1985 Mr. Oosterhuis estimates that the nursery will distribute about 2.4 million plants under the shelterbelt program.

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For further information please contact:

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January 28, 1985

For immediate release

Rail and truck freight rates rise

Canada's railways increased their freight rates for a number of agricultural commodities on January 1, 1985.

Nabi Chaudhary, Alberta Agriculture's transportation economist, says that rail rates increased by four per cent for grain and grain products, seeds, fruits and vegetables, lumber, agricultural implements and fertilizer.

The rate charged for transporting livestock had been increased between October 15, 1984 and December 31, 1984, but on January 1, 1985, it reverted to the previous rate. Livestock transportation rates are expected to rise by four per cent on April 1, 1985. Freight rates for meat are scheduled to rise by four per cent on February 2, 1985.

Mr. Chaudhary expects that commercial truck transportation rates for most agricultural commodities will rise between three and five per cent in February.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Nabi Chaudhary
427-4395

January 28, 1985

For immediate release

Seminar on continuous cropping versus summerfallow

There is still considerable controversy over the merits of continuous cropping versus summerfallowing, and a strong case can be made for either practice. No practice can be regarded as beneficial, however, if it leads to soil erosion or salinization, or the destruction or loss of organic matter. Ways must be found and practices used to prevent this.

Continuous cropping is one such practice. It will be the subject of a meeting being held by Alberta Agriculture's district agriculturists at Stettler, Coronation and Sedgewick February 14, starting at 10 a.m. in the Castor Community Centre.

The program will cover the practical and cultural aspects of continuous cropping. Speakers will discuss seedbed preparation, tillage, weed control, the use of fertilizer, moisture conservation and the economics of continuous cropping. A panel of producers will discuss their approach to moisture conservation and weed control in a continuous cropping program. Other speakers will represent Alberta Agriculture, Western Co-op Fertilizer Ltd., Hoeschst Canada and Agriculture Canada.

The registration fee is $10 per person, and the deadline for registration is February 12. To register, please call the Alberta Agriculture office at Sedgewick (384-3737), Coronation (578-3970) or Stettler (742-4481).

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Andy Birch
742-4481

January 28, 1985

For immediate release

Gardening season starts now

For every true gardener, the season really starts in the winter when the seed catalogues arrive.

Before you order from one of the 85 or so catalogues that are out this year, a little planning may be a good idea, especially if this will be your first garden. That's the suggestion from Betty Vladicka, an extension horticulturist at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre near Edmonton.

It's easy to overestimate the time and energy you'll have for gardening, she says. As a rule of thumb (green thumb?) for new gardeners, once you've planned your garden, cut it in half and it should be about the right size. Some crops -- celery, broccoli and cabbage, for instance -- need more attention than others, so don't plant them if you expect to be short of time.

Consider, too, what will grow well given the size and location of your garden. Vine crops may take up too much room in a small patch. Ideally, a garden should get five to six hours of sunlight each day; in a shady area, root crops and salad vegetables will do better than things like tomatoes and corn.

Another factor in planning a garden is the yield of the different vegetables -- and zucchini is a case in point. "In the last couple of years everyone has learned that one or two zucchini plants are usually plenty," says Mrs. Vladicka.

One source of information about seed varieties is the *Alberta Horticultural Guide,* a booklet listing varieties that have proven successful in this province. These varieties are usually readily available from seed houses in Alberta. Varieties not listed in the guide, or seed brought in from other regions, may or may not be satisfactory.

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Gardening season starts now (cont'd)

The best results usually come from using fresh seed every year. Even when seed is stored properly -- in a cool, dark place in a paper container, not plastic -- the germination rate can be unpredictable after the first year. The germination rate of seed that has been frozen can drop significantly.

One thing that helps to keep gardening interesting, even for the expert, is that new varieties are always being developed. With delights such as white marigolds and purple broccoli appearing in some of this year's seed catalogues, it looks like an exciting season ahead.

Copies of the *Alberta Horticultural Guide* are available free from Alberta Agriculture's district offices or the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Betty Vladicka
973-3351

January 28, 1985

For immediate release

Swine specialist appointed for Vermilion region

Ron Bazylo has been appointed the regional swine specialist for region 4. His appointment is announced by Ralph Berkan, Alberta Agriculture's regional director at Vermilion.

Mr. Bazylo will coordinate and conduct swine extension programs for the region. This includes providing production information to producers and staff, coordinating provincial swine programs, and working with swine organizations and related agribusiness.

Since 1980 Mr. Bazylo has been Alberta Agriculture's district agriculturist at Two Hills. He holds two degrees in agriculture, both specializing in swine nutrition, from the University of Manitoba -- a B.Sc. in 1977 and an M.Sc. in 1979.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Ron Bazylo
853-2811

January 28, 1985

For immediate release

Plant pathologist appointed

David Sippell will join Alberta Agriculture February 15 as the plant pathologist at the regional crops laboratory in Fairview.

Ieuan Evans, supervisor of plant pathology with the crop protection branch, announced the appointment.

As plant pathologist, Mr. Sippell will diagnose plant disease problems in the Fairview region; conduct research into plant diseases, particularly those affecting the yields of cereals and canola; and carry out extension work with both producers and field staff.

Mr. Sippell will move to Fairview from Beaverlodge where he has worked at the Agriculture Canada Research Station on a Farming for the Future project dealing with root diseases of canola. Prior to that he worked with the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization in Sudan.

Mr. Sippell holds a B.Sc. and M.Sc. in plant pathology from the University of Guelph. He is a native of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and is married and has one son.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

David Sippell
835-2291

AGRI-NEWS

February 4, 1985

For immediate release

This Week

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February 4, 1985

For immediate release

Grow With Canola Program

A five per cent increase in canola yield per year for the next five years -- that's what the Canola Council of Canada is aiming for with its new program called Grow With Canola.

Alberta growers heard about the program at their annual meeting in Edmonton January 24.

The five-year average yield for canola in Canada is 21 bushels per acre. Some producers, however, consistently achieve yields of 35 to 40 bushels by following certain production practices. These practices, along with information from researchers across Canada, have been included in a 200-page growers' manual, one element of the Grow With Canola program.

Phil Thomas, the supervisor of oilseed crops with Alberta Agriculture, wrote the manual, which is intended for use in Ontario and the western provinces. The manual covers all aspects of canola production from tillage and the use of chemicals, to harvesting and marketing.

The members of canola growers' associations will receive the manual free; anyone else can get a copy for $5 from the canola council in Winnipeg.

In addition to the manual, the Grow With Canola program will consist of growers' exhibitions, seminars, on-farm demonstrations, advertising and a variety of projects in which growers will be able to participate. Agronomic research will continue, and farmers will be kept informed about the latest information and technical advancements.

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Grow With Canola Program (cont'd)

Canola production fairs are scheduled for Lloydminster March 20 and 21, and Grande Prairie March 28 and 29.

The canola council says its program is one of the most intensive productivity improvement plans ever attempted in Canadian agriculture. With 40 per cent of Canada's canola crop produced in Alberta, the program is certain to receive much attention in this province.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Phil Thomas
782-4641

For immediate release

Director of resource planning welcomes ECA report

The director of Alberta Agriculture's resource planning division says he is pleased with the recent report from the Environment Council of Alberta (ECA) which deals with the maintenance and expansion of Alberta's agricultural land.

Brian Colgan says the ECA report addresses in detail two longstanding issues in regard to farmland -- the loss of productive land to non-agricultural uses, and soil degradation through erosion and salinization.

In addition, he says, the report recommends a framework in which action can be taken: the formation of a single provincial agency responsible for seeing that agricultural land is conserved, and the placement of responsibility for land use decisions in the hands of local municipal authorities.

The emphasis on involving local groups -- the report mentions agricultural service boards -- is consistent with the way Alberta Agriculture now carries out may of its soil and water conservation projects, says Mr. Colgan.

Among the ECA report's 29 recommendations is one suggesting that a compensation fund should be set up to underwrite projects and research aimed at improving soil conservation and increasing the productivity of agricultural land.

The ECA report and recommendations were based on public hearings at 17 locations throughout Alberta. The report points out that agriculture is Alberta's most important industry in terms of jobs, but that unless action is taken to preserve agricultural land, the province's well-being could be in jeopardy.

- 30 -

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February 4, 1985

For immediate release

GRAS opens new markets

Western Canada's canola industry has an expanded market because of a recent decision by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). On January 28 the FDA granted GRAS (generally regarded as safe) status to canola oil, meaning that for the first time canola oil can be sold for human consumption in the United States.

Barry Mehr, Alberta Agriculture's assistant deputy minister of marketing, says the FDA decision will permit Alberta's canola processors to compete for a share of the vegetable oil market in the western United States, a region that uses about two billion pounds of oil annually but produces only about 370 million pounds.

One possible market for canola oil is in the frozen french fry industry in Washington, Oregon and Idaho, where about half the french fries in the United States are produced.

On the positive side, Alberta has a freight advantage over American oil suppliers in the east, says Mr. Mehr. This advantage will partly compensate for the tariff applied to vegetable oils entering the United States.

The granting of GRAS status to canola oil also opens markets in many other countries that use FDA standards -- Egypt, for example. Alberta Agriculture will work with industry to pursue the new market opportunities, Mr. Mehr said.

- 30 -

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February 4, 1985

For immediate release

Poor nutrition, cold weather lead to cattle lice

The early onset of cold weather and the feed shortage this year could lead to a severe louse infestation in Alberta cattle, says Dr. Ali Khan, pest control specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Early diagnosis and treatment are the keys to controlling lice to prevent serious losses from both anemia and death, he says. Anemic animals can lose up to one-third of their red blood cells, and those that are heavily infested are susceptible to respiratory diseases. A high louse population can also stunt the growth of cattle, reduce milk production and cause general unthriftiness.

Symptoms of louse infestation

Cattle which are heavily infested with lice have a rough, patchy, dirty coat and poor physical condition. Around the eyes and in the folds of skin on the neck you can find the slate-blue adult lice which are about one-eighth of an inch long. You'll find the heads of many of them buried in the animal's skin. The cream-colored eggs or nits, which are attached to the hair, look like a string of beads.

Cattle that are severely infested may be coated with blood from lice that have gorged themselves and then been crushed when the host scratched against something to relieve the irritation caused by the biting and sucking.

Dr. Khan also recommends checking your herd for chronic or carrier cows. They are usually older animals which become infested with lice every year and reinfest the entire herd. If these carriers aren't deloused, they may abort their calves as a result of louse-induced anemia.

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Poor nutrition, cold weather lead to cattle lice (cont'd)

Treatment

There are nine insecticides which will control lice on beef and dairy cattle. They are all listed in the publication *Control of Cattle Lice (FS 420/651-2),* which is available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices and county agricultural offices.

One injection of Ivomec can keep cattle louse-free for up to five months. Although this chemical is expensive, it eliminates the need for a second treatment with a systemic insecticide. "It's perfectly all right to treat cattle that were treated for warbles last fall with the same chemical or any of the recommended compounds," says Dr. Khan.

A heavy louse infestation is usually found on cattle that were not treated for warbles. Cattle producers should take extra precautions and read the label recommendations for treating such cattle in order to avoid a host-parasite reaction that might lead to paralysis or bloat.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Ali Khan
427-9051

For immediate release

Long-term agricultural outlook positive

The long-term outlook for agriculture in Alberta is positive, and we shouldn't let short-term problems overshadow the strength of the industry, says Doug Radke, an assistant deputy minister with Alberta Agriculture.

Much of the current pessimism surrounding agriculture stems from short-term analysis that underestimates the importance of long-term demand, Mr. Radke said at the annual meeting of the Alberta Canola Growers' Association held in Edmonton January 24.

Over the next 10 years the world's population will continue to require food beyond that which most countries can produce. Mr. Radke said that even China will continue to need to import food, despite its recent dramatic increases in grain production. The Pacific Rim market for meats and livestock will also expand, and Alberta's abundant feed supplies and grazing lands should enable this province to be competitive in those markets.

Alberta's other strengths, he said, include the diversity of its agricultural industry, the growth in its food processing industry and the willingness of farmers to be innovative.

Alberta is going to need all those advantages, because we'll face tougher competition from the United States for export markets in the future. Productivity will be the key to survival and prosperity over the next decade, but Mr. Radke added, greater productivity is possible. An example, he said is the canola growers' own Grow With Canola program, aimed at increasing yields by five per cent per year over the next five years.

- (cont'd) -

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Long-term agricultural outlook positive (cont'd)

Mr. Radke concluded by encouraging producers to help influence the long-term future of agriculture by expressing their views on the provincial government's recent White Paper and the position paper on agriculture, due to be released next spring.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Doug Radke
422-1072

For immediate release

Agriculture Week - March 10 - 16

March 10 to 16 has been declared Agriculture Week in Alberta by LeRoy Fjordbotten, the minister of agriculture.

Mr. Fjordbotten says the event is intended to point out the many ways in which Alberta's 57,000 farmers and the rest of the agricultural industry contribute to the well-being of the province.

Not only do Albertans -- like all Canadians -- spend less of their incomes on food than do people living almost anywhere else, but agriculture is good business as well. Exports of agricultural goods and food bring in $2 billion every year. The value of the food processing industry has grown from $1 billion in 1973 to $3.9 billion in 1983. In 1984 Alberta farmers spent $1.4 billion on items like feed, fertilizer, fuel, buildings and machinery.

Because agriculture is a renewable resource, the province will continue to benefit from it, Mr. Fjordbotten said.

Agriculture Week activities will include a province-wide television program, newspaper supplements, displays, special events and the induction of four people into the Agricultural Hall of Fame.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

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427-2127

For immediate release

Wild rice symposium

A meeting will be held in Lac La Biche on February 20 for producers of one of Alberta's newest and most unusual crops: wild rice.

This will be the second year that wild rice has been grown commercially in Alberta. It's seeded in shallow lakes in the fall and harvested late the following August. Last year wild rice brought growers between $2.00 and $2.50 per pound.

Although wild rice is relatively new to Alberta, 75 people seeded it last fall, and the crop has generated a good deal of interest, says Harvey Yoder, Alberta Agriculture's district agriculturist in Lac La Biche.

The Northern Alberta Wild Rice Growers' Association is holding the symposium February 20 both for people who already grow wild rice, and those considering it.

The topics on the program include lake selection, seeding, harvesting, harvesting equipment, marketing and news of wild rice growers in other provinces. There will also be displays, a film on wild rice production, an update from Alberta Energy and Natural Resources, and a summary of the activities of the Alberta Wild Rice Association.

The featured speakers are Dr. Peter Lee, a researcher from Lakehead University, and Mr. Laurie Gaffray of the Manitoba Wild Rice Farmers' Association.

The fee for the symposium is $12 per person. Please register by February 15 by sending a cheque or money order to the Northern Alberta Wild Rice Growers' Association, Box 2007, Lac La Biche, Alberta, TOA 2CO. More information is available from Harvey Yoder at 623-5218.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Harvey Yoder
623-5218

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February 4, 1985

For immediate release

Protective clothing for farm welders

When farmers prepare to do some welding they naturally check their torches and other equipment. In the interests of safety they might also check the labels on the clothes they're wearing to make sure the fabrics are safe.

Synthetics like nylon and polyester are the worst possible choices for welders' clothing, because when these fabrics are exposed to heat they melt and drip a molten bead that can cause severe burns.

What kind of clothing is best for farm welders? No fabric can be said to be the best, but several are reasonably safe -- and they are likely to be among the clothes a farmer wears already, says Bertha Eggertson, a clothing and textiles specialist with Alberta Agriculture. Ordinary cotton coveralls are suitable for welders provided they also wear a leather apron, sleeves and gloves. Wool, although warm, doesn't ignite easily and extinguishes itself once the flame is removed.

In general, says Ms. Eggertson, fabrics made with heavy, tightly twisted yarns and a firm weave are safer than loose, lightweight fabrics. It's possible to buy fabrics that are treated to resist flame, but these may be rather expensive for someone who does welding only occasionally.

A new pamphlet from Alberta Agriculture offers more information about welders' clothing and safety equipment. The title is *Protective Clothing for Farm Welders (Homedex 1353-90-1),* and copies are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices or the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Bertha Eggertson
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February 4, 1985

For immediate release

New scholarship for 4-H members

A new 4-H scholarship of $800, sponsored by the Lilydale Co-operative, will be awarded annually beginning in 1985. Tymen Donkersgoed, chairman of the board of the Lilydale Co-operative Association, and Ted Youck, head of the 4-H branch of Alberta Agriculture, announced the scholarship in January.

The Lilydale Co-operative scholarship will be awarded to one present or former Alberta 4-H member who has completed at least three years in 4-H and shown leadership qualities and interest in community activities. It is open to second-year students enrolled in any degree program at any Alberta college or university.

Each year the 4-H branch awards $19,350 in scholarships to 28 4-H members. These awards are provided by individuals, provincial and national organizations, and Alberta Agriculture. 4-H scholarships assist members in furthering their education in a variety of fields.

For more information about scholarships available through the 4-H branch, please contact your district home economist or regional 4-H specialist. Elizabeth Webster, Alberta Agriculture's personal development specialist, can also provide applications. Her address is: 4-H Branch, J. G. O'Donoghue Bldg., 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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For further information please contact:

Elizabeth Webster
427-2541

February 4, 1985

For immediate release

Seminar on protecting farm investment

A seminar planned for the St. Albert Inn February 26 is intended to make farmers aware of ways they can protect their farm investments.

Speakers will cover four main topics: understanding farm loans, the implications of doing business with dealers and contractors, insurance for farmers, and management of farm debts and cash flow.

The emphasis in this seminar will be to make farmers aware of possible problems and provide positive suggestions, says Bob Winchell, Alberta Agriculture's regional economist at Barrhead. The seminar is being sponsored by Alberta Agriculture.

The fee is $10 per person or $15 per couple and includes lunch. Advance registration would be appreciated. To register, please phone any Alberta Agriculture district office in the region northwest of Edmonton.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Bob Winchell
674-8258

February 4, 1985

For immediate release

Still room to register for MATFP

If you wanted to attend the conference Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP) but thought registration would be full, here's good news: there's still room!

MATFP will be held this year at Chateau Lake Louise from March 11 to 14. The conference offers speakers on farm technology, agricultural issues and human relations.

The keynote speaker at MATFP this year will be Dr. Joe Connell of Waterloo, Ontario. His topic will be motivation.

The registration fee for MATFP is $125 per person or $150 for husband and wife. Registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices or the farm business management branch at Olds. If you'd like more information about the conference, please call the farm business management branch at (403) 556-4276.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

James Obniawka
556-4240

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February 4, 1985

For immediate release

District agriculturist appointed at Warner

James Hironaka has been appointed district agriculturist at Alberta Agriculture's office at Warner. His appointment is announced by Eric Horton, the department's regional director at Lethbridge.

Mr. Hironaka was raised on a mixed farm at Raymond, Alberta. He has a B.Sc. in agriculture from the University of Alberta, and a diploma from the Olds School of Agriculture.

For the past 12 winters Mr. Hironaka has worked out of Alberta Agriculture's district office at Lethbridge as a district agriculturist.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

James Hironaka
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February 4, 1985

For immediate release

ADC loans officers appointed

Peter Young, the Agricultural Development Corporation's (ADC) regional manager at Airdrie, has announced the appointment of two loans officers -- Tage Hansen at Drumheller, and John Sanford at Calgary.

Mr. Hansen was raised on a mixed farm in the Raymond area and has a degree in agricultural economics from Brigham Young University.

Mr. Sanford has worked as a loans officer and manager in a number of banking institutions in Alberta since 1978.

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For further information please contact:

Peter Young
948-5101

AGRI-NEWS

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For immediate release

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February 11, 1985

For immediate release

Horses must be fed

In a winter as severe as this one, many horses cannot survive by foraging; they must be fed, says Bob Coleman, the provincial horse specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Mr. Coleman urges horse owners to check their animals closely and feed them if there's any sign of weight loss. He cautions that it's impossible to check properly just by looking at a horse from a distance because the animal's heavy winter coat may hide a weight loss until it becomes extreme. "The best way to check your horse's condition is to get your hands on the animal," he says.

What to feed -- hay, grain or both -- and the amount, will depend on the general condition of the horse and how much pasture it can get by foraging.

This year foraging is difficult in many parts of Alberta because of crusted snow and ice, and the fact that there's often little grass under the snow anyway, says Mr. Coleman. Horses have also been stressed by the early winter and fluctuating temperatures. Many animals started this winter in poorer condition than usual because of sparse pasture last summer and fall. Most vulnerable are mares in the last trimester of pregnancy and horses younger than two years.

In addition to adequate feed, horse owners should provide their animals with unlimited water, and shelter from the wind, Mr. Coleman says.

Many of the horse deaths reported in Alberta over the past few weeks have resulted from the owners' misunderstanding of what the animals need, more than deliberate cruelty, says Mr. Coleman.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Bob Coleman
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February 11, 1985

For immediate release

Beef cow feed requirements

The feed requirements of beef cows increase sharply during the last six weeks of pregnancy and even more after calving. Although feed is short this year and producers may be tempted to cut corners, underfeeding doesn't pay, says Dave Plett, Alberta Agriculture's ruminant nutritionist.

During the last trimester of pregnancy, 70 per cent of the calf is formed and the cow's energy and protein requirements rise by about 20 per cent. After calving, these requirements jump again by 20 to 25 per cent to meet the increased demands of lactation.

Feed supplements used at this time may take the form of grain if the diet is energy-deficient, or legume hays or protein supplements to raise protein levels.

The cow's mineral requirements also increase during late pregnancy, and the supplements required will depend on what you're feeding. For example, a high legume ration can provide adequate calcium but not enough phosphorus; the opposite may be true of high grain rations.

Producers concerned about trace minerals should remember the feedstuffs in the diet can influence the amount of trace minerals that need to be added through a supplement.

The only way to be sure of meeting your cattle's requirements is by having your feed analysed, says Mr. Plett. Alberta Agriculture's soil and feed testing laboratory will analyse feed, and on request, staff will make ration recommendations. Producers can check with

- (cont'd) -

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Beef cow feed requirements (cont'd)

district agriculturists for details on submitting feed samples, the costs of testing, and interpretation of test results.

Feed testing doesn't cost; it pays. Overfeeding is wasteful; underfeeding, on the other hand, can result in losses of cow productivity.

Consult your district agriculturist, regional livestock specialist or other qualified nutritionist to discuss your feeding program.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Dave Plett
436-9150

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

February 11, 1985

For immediate release

Conference for disabled farmers

Disabled farmers will have an opportunity to share their common concerns at a conference planned for Edmonton March 20 - 23.

The conference is supported by the Alberta Women's Institute, Women of Unifarm and Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program. The conference is open to disabled farmers, their families, farm equipment manufacturers and distributors, health and safety workers, and disabled people considering farming as an occupation.

One of the conference organizers is Merv Copeland, who runs a mixed farm near Tomahawk, Alberta. In 1976 Mr. Copeland lost both arms in a farm accident. He has had to adjust many of his farming practices through trial and error, he says, and hopes that the Edmonton conference will give disabled farmers a chance to learn from others. A unique feature of the conference will be a display of farm machinery modifications for the disabled. One of conference's objectives is to make manufacturers more aware of the needs of disabled farmers.

In Mr. Copeland's experience the support of family and the community is invaluable. At the time of his accident there were no support groups or other resources, and he hopes this conference will help to fill that gap.

Patsy Pyke of the farm safety program agrees that in the past there was little support for disabled farmers, and that the rehabilitation system tended to encourage them to change their occupation rather than to adjust. But physical disabilities clearly do not stop people from farming -- it's estimated that between three and five per cent of prairie farmers have permanent disabilities. That means there could be 2,000 disabled farmers in Alberta alone.

- (cont'd) -

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Conference for disabled farmers (cont'd)

The registration fee for the conference is $10 per person.

Registration forms are available at Alberta Agriculture's district offices, from the Canadian Paraplegic Association in Edmonton or from Farm Safety, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Patsy Pyke
427-2186

Merv Copeland
339-2102

February 11, 1985

For immediate release

1984 honey crop reaches record

In 1984 Alberta beekeepers harvested a record honey crop for the second year in a row. A survey conducted by the statistics branch of Alberta Agriculture and Statistics Canada estimates 1984 production at more than 27 million pounds, an increase of 10 per cent from 1983.

Michael Adam of the statistics branch says that, as usual, the Peace region accounted for about one-half the province's honey crop, while the northwest region contributed one-third.

Expectations of a drought-reduced yield in the southern region did not materialize. Unfortunately, however, the drought did affect production in the south-central region where honey yield and production fell below 1983 levels.

The survey also yielded information about the number of beekeepers and colonies, and values of honey and wax. Anyone who would like this information can contact the Statistics Branch, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6; phone 427-4013.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Michael Adam
427-4013

February 11, 1985

For immediate release

Seminar compares soil testing labs

A seminar planned for March 7 in Lethbridge will give farmers a first-hand look at how the province's soil testing laboratories compare.

Alberta's five major private soil testing labs and the government lab have each been given the same two soil samples to analyse, and two sets of soil sample test results on which they have been asked to make fertilizer recommendations. Representatives of each lab will present their findings at the seminar, and all results will be tabulated in a handout for those attending.

Dr. Jim Robertson, a professor of soil science at the University of Alberta, will discuss soil testing and test interpretation before and after the labs make their presentations.

"The purpose of the seminar is to let farmers know about the importance and limitations of soil testing," says Ross McKenzie, a soil fertility specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

The seminar will run from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., on the third floor of the Exhibition Grandstand Building. There is no need to register, and no admission charge. Further information is available from Mr. McKenzie at 329-5126.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Ross McKenzie
329-5126

February 11, 1985

For immediate release

Grazing land available in northern Alberta

There's still room for livestock on some of the grazing reserves in the Grande Prairie and Peace River region, but the deadline for applying to pasture livestock is approaching quickly.

Applications for the reserves near Peace River are available from Bill Irvine at 624-6345. The deadline for applying for the Peace River pastures is February 15. The application deadline for the Grande Prairie reserves is February 28, and forms are available from Al Taylor at 538-5263.

The 1985 grazing fee for these pastures is $7.05 per cow-calf unit per month, plus the cost of salt, minerals and pharmaceuticals.

Grazing reserves are community pastures developed on Crown land, and are administered by Alberta Energy and Natural Resources. An association made up of livestock owners sets membership fees, breeding policies and advises the department.

Cattle and sheep are usually pastured on Alberta's 32 grazing reserves between mid-May and mid-October, and cared for by supervisors and riders employed by the department. If grass supplies permit, horses may be pastured through the winter.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

John Laarhuis
Head, grazing reserves section
Alberta Energy and Natural Resources
427-5256

February 11, 1985

For immediate release

New pamphlet features mushrooms

What country do you think has the world's highest per capita mushroom consumption? Japan? Somewhere in Europe?

The answer is Canada, where, according to Agriculture Canada, mushrooms are served in 94 per cent of all households, and consumption has -- well, mushroomed by more than 700 per cent since 1963.

In Alberta the increased demand keeps seven growers busy supplying mushrooms which are sold fresh in stores and to foodservice operations. These growers supply almost all the fresh mushrooms consumed in the province, and their sales reach about $11 million each year. The per capita consumption of fresh mushrooms in Alberta is about 2.5 pounds per year.

Once considered a delicacy, fresh mushrooms are now available year-round, says Lorraine Rea of Alberta Agriculture's agri-food development branch. Fresh mushrooms are easy and quick to prepare. They are also low in calories, with only about 28 calories per cup. Unlike most vegetables, mushrooms contain large amounts of the B vitamins and are rich in folic acid.

The agri-food development branch has just released a new pamphlet containing suggestions for preparing and using mushrooms, along with a variety of recipes. Copies of *Alberta Fresh Mushrooms (Homedex 1131-17-1)* are available from the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6; or from Alberta Agriculture's district offices.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Lorraine Rea
427-7366

February 11, 1985

For immediate release

Entry forms available for Pork Congress competition

Entry forms are available for the barrow carcass class, the commercial gilt class and the junior market hog competition to be held at this year's Alberta Pork Congress.

The deadline for entering the barrow class is March 1, and the entry fee is $24. Producers who want to show hogs in the commercial gilt class or the purebred classes must enter the barrow class first.

The deadline for entering the junior market hog competition is March 29, and there's no entry fee.

Producers who competed last year will receive entry forms in the mail; anyone else can get an entry form from Art Lange of Alberta Agriculture's Pork Industry Branch, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

The Alberta Pork Congress will be held in Red Deer from June 11 to 13.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Art Lange
427-5319

February 11, 1985

For immediate release

Livestock pest control seminar

A seminar on livestock pest control will be held in Red Deer March 11. The seminar is designed as an update for licensed pest control applicators, livestock specialists and anyone else involved with livestock pest control.

Ali Khan of Alberta Agriculture and Hugh Philip of the Alberta Environmental Centre will conduct the seminar. They will discuss the latest control measures for common pests affecting beef and dairy cattle, swine and sheep.

The seminar, which is being organized by the pesticide chemicals branch of Alberta Environment, will run from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Provincial Building. Anyone interested in attending is asked to register in advance with Janet McLean-Mueller in Edmonton at 427-5855. There is no fee for the seminar.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Janet McLean-Mueller
427-5855

For immediate release

Pruning time

March and April is the time to prune most landscape trees and shrubs, but there are several things to do before cutting off any branches, says George Grainger, director of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre.

Unless a tree is diseased, or has been poorly pruned in the past and needs to be corrected, it isn't necessary to prune at all. "Pruning should be an art, not a drudgery," says Mr. Grainger. He suggests studying your plants from a distance to judge their general shape, and then reading a pruning manual. The publication *Pruning in Alberta (Agdex 270/24-1)* from Alberta Agriculture is a good place to start.

"After studying a manual and your plants you may decide not to prune. It's better to leave your trees alone than to prune and ruin them," says Mr. Grainger.

If your trees are growing into utility lines, get professional help -- don't try to prune them yourself.

The proper equipment is necessary in order to do a good job of pruning. That equipment consists of a good scissor-type hand pruner called "secateurs," a set of long-handled pruning shears and a pruning saw with large teeth that won't plug up with sawdust. All these tools need to be sharp. A hand saw isn't suitable, and can be ruined if it's used for pruning. Finally, you'll need a can of tree wound dressing to cover up large cuts.

Once you've decided that you must prune, prune to create a natural shape and size. Mr. Grainger recommends doing more thinning of entire branches than removing small branch-lets. "Cut with care; nature is unforgiving of mistakes," he says.

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For further information please contact:

George Grainger
973-3351

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Phone: (403) 427-2121

February 11, 1985

For immediate release

Gulf Canada award supports 4-H

4-H members who have made outstanding contributions to community service and citizenship projects will be eligible for a new scholarship of $1,000 beginning in 1985.

The Gulf Canada Citizenship Study Award is open to students entering their first year of university, college or technical school in any field of study. Applicants must be at least 16 years old, currently enrolled in 4-H, and must have been a member for two years or more. They must also submit a 500-word essay with the application form. The Gulf Canada award will be presented to one 4-H member from each province.

The 4-H branch encourages past and present 4-H members planning to further their education beyond high school to apply for 4-H scholarships. There are 29 available in Alberta, and they range in value and requirements.

Application forms and complete details for all awards will be available in March, and July 15 is the application deadline. To receive forms and information, contact Elizabeth Webster, personal development specialist with Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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For further information please contact:

Elizabeth Webster
427-2541

February 11, 1985

For immediate release

Acting head appointed to regional laboratory

Dr. Paul Frelier has been appointed acting head of Alberta Agriculture's regional veterinary laboratory at Airdrie. For the next year Dr. Frelier will replace Dr. Nick Nation who is on educational leave.

Dr. Frelier received his DVM degree from the University of California, Davis, in 1974. He practised for a year at Prince George, B.C., then entered graduate school at the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell University. In 1981 Dr. Frelier was granted a PhD in pathology, and received certification from the American College of Veterinary Pathologists.

Dr. Frelier joined the staff of the regional veterinary laboratory in Airdrie in the fall of 1981.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Dr. Paul Frelier
948-6868

AGRI-NEWS

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February 18, 1985

For immediate release

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February 18, 1985

For immediate release

Feed shortage worsens - alternatives limited

The present livestock feed shortage can really be called an energy shortage, because in a year like this energy is the most difficult nutrient to supplement, says Don Scheer, the acting head of the animal nutrition section of Alberta Agriculture.

While producers can easily add protein, vitamins and minerals in the form of supplements or premixes, they're very limited in alternative sources of energy for cattle rations.

There are three choices short of selling cattle, says Mr. Scheer.

The obvious alternative is to buy additional roughage -- hay, straw or silage. This winter, however, forage isn't available in many areas, and high trucking costs make it too expensive to transport far.

A second alternative is to increase the feeding value of straw by ammoniation or the value of hay by chopping or grinding. But each of these has disadvantages, says Mr. Scheer. The benefits of ammoniation are uncertain when the process is carried out at temperatures below $10^{o}C$. Chopping of poor quality roughage is helpful only in preventing waste, not improving animal performance. Chopping mixes in the coarse stems, moldy portions and other forage which by itself would be unpalatable or possibly toxic. Fine grinding will cause the animals to eat more and improve their performance, but the increased intake is in itself a disadvantage when feed supplies are short.

A third alternative is to supplement or replace roughage with cereal grains. The relatively good supply of grains makes this the only feasible choice for many farmers, says Mr. Scheer. But, he cautions, grain can be used wisely only if all the ingredients in the ration have been tested; otherwise it defeats the purpose of trying to extend the roughage.

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Feed shortage worsens - alternatives limited (cont'd)

''Even in an emergency it's not too late to feed test,'' he says. Many labs in Alberta will provide the results of a feed analysis within 48 hours.

Here are three ways that feed ingredients can be substituted to conserve forage.

Ration component	Possible substitute
4.5 kg (10 lb) barley grain	5 kg (11 lb) oats grain
5 kg (11 lb) alfalfa hay	3 kg (6.6 lb) barley grain plus 1.4 kg (3 lb) of a 32 per cent protein supplement
5 kg (11 lb) grass hay	3 kg (6.6 lb) barley grain

Pregnant cows need extra attention, says Mr. Scheer. Their nutrient requirements increase by 20 per cent before calving and again by 25 per cent after calving. Poor quality roughage and straw diets must be supplemented with grain at this time. How much depends on a feed analysis.

Replacing regular feedstuffs with alternative feeds (usually waste-products) like cull potatoes, corn stover and wood wastes is always a popular discussion topic during a feed shortage, says Mr. Scheer. These materials can be used in animal diets but are often less readily available than the feeds they're intended to replace. If any of these feeds are used, a feed test is necessary.

When selling part of the herd, even at this time of year, he recommends first culling the hard-keepers, the thin and older cows, because they and their calves often end up costing more than they return.

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Feed shortage worsens - alternatives limited (cont'd)

Selling some cattle now to generate money to buy sufficient feed for the remaining herd will help to prevent long-term problems such as lower weaning weights and delayed first estrus after calving.

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This is the first in a series of four articles on how to deal with the feed shortage.
Next week: Making the most of the feed you've got.

For further information please contact:

Don Scheer
436-9150

February 18, 1985

For immediate release

Choose feed grains for feeding value

A barley shortage in southern Alberta is causing some cattle feeders to consider using other feed grains. The decision of whether to use any of these alternatives, and if so, which, should be based on the feeding value and price of each, says Dwight Karren, Alberta Agriculture's regional livestock specialist in Lethbridge.

Unfortunately, price is often the only thing that's considered, he says.

Since feed grains are mainly a source of energy in feedlot rations, they should be rated according to their price per unit of energy. Corn and wheat have more digestible energy per pound than does barley, while oats and refuse screenings have less.

If barley is $150 per tonne, corn would have to be at or below $159 per tonne to make it economical based on the energy it provides, wheat would have to be $157.50 per tonne, oats $138 per tonne, refuse screenings $125 per tonne and beet pulp $139.50 per tonne.

At these relative prices, barley is still a good buy, says Mr. Karren. On February 1, 1985 corn was $177.19 per tonne, wheat $158.02 per tonne, oats $138 per tonne, pelleted screenings $130 per tonne and beet pulp $157.50 per tonne. All these were local retail prices in Lethbridge.

Some feed grains have limitations in feedlot rations, says Mr. Karren. Because of a palatability problem, wheat should not make up more than 40 per cent of a high-grain ration, and cattle must be adapted slowly to wheat rations. Higher proportions of wheat can be used

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Choose feed grains on feeding value (cont'd)

in low-grain rations in which grain is mixed with silage. Because oats and refuse screenings have a higher fibre content and lower energy value, they should not make up more than 30 per cent of a high grain ration. Refuse screenings pellets may break up, causing fines, bloat and palatability problems.

Mr. Karren has prepared a complete analysis of comparative feed grain prices. Copies are available from his office in the Provincial Building in Lethbridge.

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For further information please contact:

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329-5106

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February 18, 1985

For immediate release

World wheat outlook

World wheat production will reach a record for the fourth consecutive year and market competition will continue to be intense, says Dwayne Couldwell, Alberta Agriculture's grains analyst.

Going into this crop year, the international wheat market was depressed because of a surplus, and the situation has been aggravated by the record crop estimated at 509 million tonnes.

The only thing that could revive the wheat market, says Mr. Couldwell, would be crop problems in the northern hemisphere and there don't appear to be any. "In the intrim, all we can hope for is that current depressed levels have reached bottom," says Mr. Couldwell.

The largest increase in wheat production in 1984-85 occurred in China, which became the world's leading producer. This development puts China's long-term imports in doubt. The EEC also produced a record wheat crop estimated at 76 million tonnes, a 27 per cent increase from the previous year. EEC exports are forecast to increase by 16 per cent this year. Even so, says Mr. Couldwell, it's likely the EEC will become more aggressive in its marketing efforts.

Argentina, although well down the list of wheat producers, is a major exporter -- and an aggressive one. Because Argentina cannot offer credit to its customers, it has discounted its wheat prices.

The Soviet wheat crop is estimated at 170 million tonnes, and this will be the sixth year in a row that country has failed to reach its production target. Unusually high Soviet wheat imports, however, have not offset the reduced Chinese demand and increased supplies in the EEC, Argentina and the United States.

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World wheat outlook (cont'd)

Canada's wheat production also dropped last year, to about 21 million tonnes, 20 per cent less than 1983-84. Canadian exports are forecast to reach only 16 million tonnes, down from nearly 22 million last year, and carryover into the new crop year may reach a 20-year low.

All this will continue to provide unlimited delivery opportunity, says Mr. Couldwell.

Wheat prices on local markets are holding steady, he says but the situation will change considerably by fall. Rapid increases in unlicensed wheat varieties could lead to a surplus of non-board wheat and farmers growing unlicensed or non-board varieties should reduce their price expectations accordingly.

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For further information please contact:

Dwayne Couldwell
427-5386

For immediate release

Feedgrain outlook

Barley growers are likely to increase their acreage significantly this spring, encouraged by recent unlimited delivery opportunities, high local prices and large final payments.

Alberta Agriculture's grains analyst, Dwayne Couldwell, says, however, that the expected increase in barley supplies this year will end Canada's isolation from the depressed international feed grain market, and prices can be expected to decline.

In 1983-84 record domestic barley consumption and low carryover made barley supplies tight even before the drought reduced the 1984 crop yield. Local market prices reached $150 per tonne. The 1984 production of 10.25 million tonnes did not relieve the shortage, and carryover into the 1985-86 crop year is expected to be the lowest since 1968-69.

Mr. Couldwell says that Canadian Wheat Board 1984-85 final payments will reflect the decline that has occurred in international feed grain prices. Producers should expect returns of $10 per tonne less than 1983-84. That would put prices around $114.50 per tonne or $2.50 per bushel. "Even this estimate, which would mean a meagre $6.60 per tonne final payment next January, can be considered optimistic," he says.

The current non-board prices for barley, especially in southern Alberta, represent a premium to export prices, and are supported by the false perception that returns from board sales are competitive with local feed market prices. As long as this idea prevails, these prices are likely to hold, says Mr. Couldwell. Any prospects for a good 1985 harvest are likely to weaken these prices, however. By late 1985, elevator bids will probably be $10 to $15 below current bids in northern Alberta. Local feed market prices in southern Alberta can be expected to decline even more.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Dwayne Couldwell
427-5386

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February 18, 1985

For immediate release

Pork board and packers to develop new selling system

The Alberta Agricultural Products Marketing Council has instructed the Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board and the two provincial packers to develop a mutually agreeable system for selling hogs in Alberta, and to report their decision to the council within 30 days.

The council's decision follows an appeal launched by Gainer's Inc. against the board. The council met February 1 but decided to delay hearing the complete appeal because of a court challenge by Gainer's in which the company questioned the board's legal authority to sell hogs using a pricing system that was implemented in October, 1984.

Harvey Buckley, the chairman of the marketing council, said council members felt that until the court renders its decision on the matter, the industry needed to have a satisfactory selling system for hogs.

"The council's decision will permit the board and processors to resolve one of the thorny issues that's disrupting the industry and creating uncertainty for producers," said Mr. Buckley. Such upheaval in the marketplace chokes off much-needed investment and expansion in the processing sector and discourages many producers, he added.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Terry Appleby
427-2165

February 18, 1985

For immediate release

Hazardous gases from stored liquid manure

Many farmers are too casual about the extreme hazards of poisonous gas produced by the storage of liquid manure, says Brian West, Alberta Agriculture's animal waste management specialist.

Mr. West knows several producers who have remained unconcerned even after losing one or two animals because of toxic gas. "These people don't consider that next time it could be them or their children," he says.

The danger was pointed out recently in central Alberta when 23 dairy cows were killed by hydrogen sulphide gas that escaped when the underslat manure pit in their barn was being pumped out. One person fell unconscious when he entered the barn and attempted to chase the surviving cows outside. "The only thing that prevented a major tragedy was that as the man entered the barn he had opened a couple of large doors and thus diluted the gas," says Mr. West.

Hydrogen sulphide is notable for its rotten egg odor, but human ability to smell it disappears rapidly over time and as the gas becomes more concentrated. High concentrations of hydrogen sulphide can kill people and animals within seconds.

As long as stored liquid manure isn't disturbed, the concentration of hydrogen sulphide poses little danger, but even slight agitation of the tank may release the gas. The concentration of hydrogen sulphide seems to increase with the length of time the manure is stored and the amount of agitation.

"The greatest risks are during the emptying of storage pits in the barn, when concentrations in the pithead space and above the slats can reach lethal levels within minutes," says Mr. West.

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Hazardous gases from stored liquid manure (cont'd)

Mr. West makes the following recommendations for avoiding toxic levels of gas in barns:

* Remove animals and open all doors for maximum ventilation when agitating underslat storage within the barn.
* Disturb stored manure as little as necessary for removal. Begin the agitation slowly, allowing gases to be released gradually and removed by the ventilation system.
* Do not trust a pit fan. It may help but it cannot remove all the gases released as the manure is agitated. A pit fan's primary value is in removing odors on a day-to-day basis.
* Do not enter a manure storage pit without first completely ventilating it or wearing a self-contained breathing apparatus.
* Train all farm employees about the hazards of manure gases.
* Anyone building new facilities should consider storing the manure separately from the animal housing area. Provide a gas trap to prevent a back-flow of dangerous gases.
* Producers suspecting high gas levels (ammonia, hydrogen sulphide or carbon dioxide) in their barn may want to have the air analysed by a gas detector. Alberta Agriculture's regional engineers can arrange for this.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

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343-5324

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February 18, 1985

For immediate release

Weed Fair '85

Controlling weeds for profit is the theme of this year's provincial weed fairs. They will be held in Grande Prairie at the Exhibition Grounds February 26, and in Camrose at the Agri-Centre February 28.

Both weed fairs will run from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and admission is free.

The fairs are sponsored jointly by Alberta Agriculture and the Canadian Agricultural Chemicals Association. In addition to displays by the chemical manufacturers and equipment suppliers, the fairs will feature three seminars:

- Perennial weed control in reduced tillage systems, presented by Dr. Ross Ashford of the University of Saskatchewan
- Rates, water volumes and herbicide performance, presented by Denise Maurice of Alberta Agriculture and Ed Wiens of PAMI
- Weed competition and yield loss, presented by Dr. John O'Donovan of the Alberta Environmental Centre at Vegreville

The fairs offer a wealth of information on the materials and equipment needed to control weeds, says Walter Yarish, the acting head of Alberta Agriculture's weed control section.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Walter Yarish
427-5329

February 18, 1985

For immediate release

Hay shipments bring weeds

Farmers who buy hay are encouraged to buy from areas that are free of noxious weeds -- and if that's not possible, to be on guard for an infestation of new weeds next spring.

That's the advice from Alberta Agriculture staff who are concerned that the hay moving into and throughout Alberta may carry weed seeds that could create expensive control problems in the future.

Walter Yarish of the weed control section admits that it's difficult to identify weeds just by looking at hay, and that a farmer who needs feed for his livestock isn't likely to be choosy.

The best approach is to check the source before buying, he says. Farmers can contact the municipality where the hay comes from to find out whether the area is infested with certain weeds.

Hay coming in from B.C. or Montana may contain diffuse or spotted knapweed, which thrives on rangeland under poor conditions -- overgrazing, neglect and drought. It's possible to control knapweed, but the cost of control is often high in relation to the value of the land. B.C. and Montana are widely infested with knapweed; so far Alberta has been kept free of it.

Producers south of Calgary run the risk of bringing in scentless chamomile (sometimes called mayweed) with hay from some areas further north. "This weed is predominant in

- (cont'd) -

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Hay shipments bring weeds (cont'd)

some parts of central Alberta," says Ernie Smith, the district agriculturist at Airdrie. Scentless chamomile can invade pasture, hay and cropland, and can also be expensive to control. Other weeds that Mr. Smith says could be spread within Alberta include tansy and toadflax.

The feed shortage, however serious, is a temporary problem, says Mr. Smith. It shouldn't be allowed to create a permanent problem in the form of a serious infestation of weeds.

More information on weeds is available from agricultural fieldmen or district agriculturists.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Walter Yarish
427-5329

or

Ernie Smith
948-5152

February 18, 1985

For immediate release

Order fertilizer now

There will be enough fertilizer for this spring but there could be delays with its delivery and application. Adolph Goettel, head of Alberta Agriculture's soils branch, recommends that farmers order and store some or all of their dry granular fertilizers in March and early April.

Fertilizer will store well during that time in any well-built granary that keeps out moisture. No additional strengthening of bins is required, says Mr. Goettel, because the bulk density of fertilizer is similar to that of wheat.

The late harvest and early snow last year greatly reduced the amount of fertilizer applied last fall. Therefore, most of the 900,000 tonnes used every year in Alberta will have to be applied this spring, and the capacity of transportation facilities and application equipment will be taxed. Provincial and municipal road bans may also affect the capacity to deliver fertilizer in the spring.

Farmers using custom application equipment to apply anhydrous ammonia will be most affected by spring weather conditions. What these farmers need, says Mr. Goettel, is an early, long spring. If the application season is compressed to two or three weeks, there may be a shortage of equipment. He advises farmers to make contingency plans to avoid costly delays.

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For further information please contact:

Adolph Goettel
427-2530

February 18, 1985

For immediate release

Weed fairs in northeast region

Alberta Agriculture and several agri-chemical companies are sponsoring weed fairs in five communities northeast of Edmonton in March.

The weed fairs will be held as follows:

March 4: Community Centre, Andrew

March 5: Chateau Dining Hall, Vegreville

March 6: Wild Rose Pavilion, Lloydminister

March 7: Elks' Hall, Elk Point

March 8: Community Hall, Waskatenau

Each fair will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and will include two speakers who will discuss weed control problems specific to each area.

Featured in the fairs this year will be a display of live weed seedlings, and another showing the leaf stages of both crops and weeds. These displays will assist in determining the proper stage to apply herbicides, says Emile de Milliano, Alberta Agriculture's district agriculturist (DA) at Lamont, and coordinator of the fairs.

Representatives of agricultural chemical companies will be on hand to discuss their products with producers.

More information about the weed fairs is available from Mr. de Milliano at 895-2219, or other DAs in the northeast region.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Emile de Milliano
895-2219

February 18, 1985

For immediate release

Doctor says meat makes sense

People who maintain a healthy lifestyle can eat red meat regularly without endangering their health in any way, says Dr. Derrick Thompson of the Foothills Hospital in Calgary.

There's no basis for the widespread North American alarm over red meat and heart disease, Dr. Thompson said in Edmonton February 5. "It's an oversimplification to think that by cutting red meat out of your diet you'll reduce your chances of heart disease," he said.

For the average person, a common-sense approach will be much more effective in reducing the risk of heart disease. That means regular exercise, maintenance of a reasonable weight, controlling stress and not smoking. Since heredity also has an influence, it helps to choose one's parents carefully, said Dr. Thompson. "It's a good sign if your parents are 90 years old and have no heart problems."

Dr. Thompson made those remarks at a luncheon launching Meat Awareness Month in Alberta. The event is being sponsored by organizations representing beef, pork and lamb producers. The theme of Meat Awareness Month is meat makes sense; and its purpose, says Susan Kitchen of Alberta Agriculture, is to point out meat's many positive features in the diet, and its role in the economy. In Alberta meat processing employs about 5,500 people.

As for the value of meat in the diet, an American scientist, Dr. Elizabeth Whelan, says she can't understand the negative claims about meat. One serving provides more than half the protein a person needs daily, about one-third of the thiamin and substantial amounts of iron, phosphorous and riboflavin. "Can we honestly say that any food with all these valuable

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Doctor says meat makes sense (cont'd)

nutrients isn't good for us?'' she asks. Over the past decade changes in Canada's livestock industry have resulted in meat that is leaner than many people realize, says Ms. Kitchen. Research at the University of Guelph shows that lean cuts of beef are comparable in calories to fish and chicken, for example.

The organizers of Meat Awareness Month also say that Canadians spend less on meat than ever before -- about three per cent of their disposable income. Meat from the less tender, lower priced cuts is generally just as nutritious as the more expensive cuts.

In Alberta, the sponsors of Meat Awareness Month are the Canadian Meat Council, the Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board, the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission, the Alberta Cattle Commission and Alberta Agriculture.

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For further information please contact:

Susan Kitchen
297-8452

February 18, 1985

For immediate release

New 4-H scholarship for Peace region

4-H members living in the Peace River region may be interested in a new $500 scholarship to be awarded annually starting this year.

The Thomas Caryk Memorial scholarship will be awarded to a student enrolled in any year of a degree or diploma program in agriculture at any accredited post-secondary institution. Applicants must have completed at least three years in 4-H in the Alberta Peace region.

The winner of the award will be selected on the basis of 4-H achievement, academic performance and financial need. The scholarship was established by Steiger Canada of Saskatoon in memory of Thomas Caryk, a dealer for Steiger Canada in the Spirit River area. This scholarship is the third new 4-H award in 1985.

4-H members interested in the 29 available scholarships should contact Elizabeth Webster, Alberta Agriculture's personal development specialist, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Application forms will be available in March and are due July 15, 1985.

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For further information please contact:

Elizabeth Webster
427-2541

Alberta
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Phone: (403) 427-2121

February 18, 1985

For immediate release

Farm tax management economist appointed

Alex N. Ostapiuk has been appointed a farm tax management specialist with Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch at Olds. His appointment is announced by Wilson Loree, the branch head.

Mr. Ostapiuk will provide Alberta farmers with information on tax management, estate planning and farm business arrangements through publications and presentations at courses.

Mr. Ostapiuk grew up on a farm raising horticultural produce in southern Ontario. He is a graduate of the University of Guelph where he specialized in agricultural economics. He also has experience in accounting and agricultural credit. Since the fall of 1984 Mr. Ostapiuk worked on contract with the farm business management branch. He replaces Dan Hilsenteger, who left to take a position in industry.

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For further information please contact:

Alex Ostapiuk
556-4235

AGRI-NEWS

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For immediate release

February 25, 1985

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February 25, 1985

For immediate release

Farm receipts and expenses

The net cash income of Alberta farmers is expected to fall by 15.5 per cent in 1985 to $1,083 million from $1,282 million in 1984.

Lorraine Hope of Alberta Agriculture's statistics branch explains that even though 1984 was a poor production year, receipts were buoyed by record crop insurance payments and record volumes of wheat delivered by farmers between August and December. Much of the impact of last year's reduced production won't show up until this year when farmers will have less to sell. That, combined with an expected two per cent increase in farm expenses, will cause net farm income to decline.

A quarterly report on farm receipts and expenses from the statistics branch forecasts an equal drop in the receipts for crops and livestock in 1985 -- 3.7 per cent in each. Reduced output of cattle and hogs is expected to offset price improvements, which are forecast.

The report also shows that 1984 was the third year in which Alberta farmers continued to sell much of their inventory, the crops and livestock they normally keep from year to year. In 1984 the value of inventory on Alberta farms dropped by $372 million -- $302 million in crops and $70 million in livestock.

Copies of the report *Farm Cash Receipts and Expenses* are available from the Statistics Branch, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Lorraine Hope
427-4011

February 25, 1985

For immediate release

Cattle outlook and summary

Fed cattle prices are expected to average $3 to $4 per hundredweight more this year than last as a result of the reduced supply of Canadian slaughter cattle. Further price increases, however, will be limited by unchanged demand and supplies of competing meats, says Gordon Herrington, Alberta Agriculture's livestock market analyst.

Specifically, he forecasts that prices for A1, 2 Calgary steers will move up to $80 to $84 per hundredweight in March and early April, and then weaken to $74 to $76 during the last half of the second quarter.

The price outlook for feeder cattle is likely to improve as the year progresses. An improvement in the prospects for forage and grain supplies should strengthen prices, although this won't happen until the middle of the second quarter. Expectations of tighter supplies throughout North America will also substantially improve prices.

Reviewing the last quarter of 1984 in Alberta, Mr. Herrington notes that cow slaughter was 50 per cent higher than the same quarter of 1983 and well above that of any other period of 1984. Both steer and heifer slaughter were down in the fourth quarter. Also significant in the fourth quarter were the continuing shipments of live cattle out of Alberta.

For 1984 as a whole, Mr. Herrington estimates that total Alberta cattle slaughter was four per cent below the 1983 volume, with steer slaughter down five per cent, heifer slaughter down six per cent, but cow slaughter up nine per cent. In total, Alberta's cattle output increased by one per cent in 1984 because the decline in slaughter was offset by greater movement of live cattle out of the province.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Gordon Herrington
427-5376

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Phone: (403) 427-2121

February 25, 1985

For immediate release

Feed management: making the most of what you've got

Producers can save up to 20 per cent of their feed by using properly designed feeders instead of spreading the feed on the ground, says Don Scheer of Alberta Agriculture.

Up to 30 per cent of feed can be wasted if it's spread on the ground, while feeders can reduce the waste to 10 per cent or less, especially with chopped forages. "If you must feed on the ground, put the feed on a clean area and don't put out more than the stock can consume in one or two hours," says Mr. Scheer.

That is one of several ways feed-short producers can extend their supplies this winter.

A less obvious waste of feed results from feeding the herd in one group. In this situation cows in good condition tend to be overfed while thin cows and first-calf or second-calf heifers are usually underfed. To prevent this, Mr. Scheer recommends dividing the herd into two or three groups based on their requirements. Cows in good condition should be fed separately from thin cows and heifers, which can be fed separately or as a group depending on the facilities available.

Whenever cows are fed straw or poor quality hay, or the amount of feed is closely controlled, dividing the herd into feeding groups becomes even more important. The importance of feed testing and ration balancing also increases under these circumstances.

Protecting cows from harsh winter weather will help to reduce their nutrient requirements and thus help to conserve feed, says Mr. Scheer. In cold weather, moisture evaporation can cause considerable cold stress for cattle and increase their feed requirements. Exposure to wind increases the rate of moisture evaporation and reduces the insulation value

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Feed management: making the most of what you've got (cont'd)

of the animals' hair, again increasing feed requirements. Heat loss due to radiation can be substantial on clear, cold nights, and also increases feed requirements.

Protecting the animals from wet and windy conditions during the winter can reduce their feed requirements by 20 per cent. The ideal protection would be an eight - to 10-foot high, 20 per cent porosity fence and overhead shelter which is well ventilated. But, says Mr. Scheer, simply allowing the cattle access to bush and natural tree-covered areas will result in substantial feed savings.

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This is the second in a series of four articles on how to deal with the feed shortage.
Next week: Short and long-term effects of the shortage.

For further information please contact:

Don Scheer
436-9150

For immediate release

Salt for beef cattle

Each winter the livestock nutritionists at Alberta Agriculture's soil and feed testing laboratory receive many calls from producers wondering about what type of salt to provide for their cattle.

This year is no exception and in response Dave Plett, the lab's ruminant nutritionist, provides a summary of things to consider.

Salt in its purest form consists of two main elements, sodium and chloride. Cattle need both in considerable quantity. Sodium helps to maintain body fluid balance, transport amino acids and maintain other essential functions. The chloride portion also has several functions: it's the main ingredient of the acid secreted by the stomach and maintains the blood's acid-base balance.

Cattle, being plant eaters, need additional sodium chloride because feeds are usually deficient. Animals deficient in salt may experience muscle cramps, craving as shown by constant licking, poor production or growth, weakness and in severe cases, death.

Considering requirements for growth, heat loss in summer and various water intakes, salt requirements can range from 10 grams (1/3 ounce) per day for young, growing cattle to 40 grams (1½ ounces) and higher for mature cattle during the heavy demands of a hot summer day.

If producers don't provide salt in the ration at recommended levels, they should make sure it is available in a loose form in a free-choice manner, says Mr. Plett.

Two other components of salt that are necessary for Alberta cattle feeding conditions are cobalt and iodine. Most soils in western Canada are deficient in both.

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Salt for beef cattle (cont'd)

Cobalt is essential for the microorganisms in the rumen to produce vitamin B12 which plays a key role in energy metabolism. Deficiency of this vitamin leads to depressed appetite, followed by deteriorating condition, anemia and eventually death.

Iodine is necessary for the production of growth hormones, maintenance of body temperature and other hormone-related activities. Among the signs of deficiency are goitre, retarded growth and production, and hairless young.

Although cobalt and iodine supplements must be provided for beef cattle in Alberta, not all cattle salts marketed in the province contain adequate levels, says Mr. Plett. Cobalt iodized or blue salt does meet those requirements. Common red salt contains iodine only, and is intended for horses only. It does not contain cobalt.

To ensure that cattle are receiving these elements, the bottom line is to check the label," says Mr. Plett. Cobalt levels of .004 per cent and iodine levels of .007 per cent are the minimum needed to meet cattle's requirements.

When feeding salt, says Mr. Plett, feed loose salt and only one type. The beef animal isn't able to determine exactly what its needs are, so using one type of salt and measuring the amount the cattle consume will indicate whether the animals are coming close to meeting their requirements.

More information on salts, minerals and feeding cattle is available from Alberta Agriculture's district agriculturists, regional livestock specialists, or Mr. Plett at 436-9150.

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For further information please contact:

Dave Plett
436-9150

Alberta
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Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

For immediate release

Buying hay

Unlike most years, this winter the hay supply in Alberta is poor and the supply of straw is even worse. The lack of straw means there's no inexpensive source of energy to balance rations for wintering livestock.

Myron Bjorge, the supervisor of forage crops with Alberta Agriculture, offers some guidelines for producers who still need to buy hay.

One of the most important decisions is to decide the maximum amount to pay. While supply vs. demand ultimately determines the value of hay, Mr. Bjorge points out that most livestock owners can choose between hay and less expensive alternative feeds.

The value of the most suitable and most available substitutes for hay should be considered in each case. For example, barley grain can be substituted for good quality mixed hay (50 per cent legume). For beef cattle eight pounds of hay per day could be replaced with five pounds of barley on the basis of the energy content of these feeds. Barley at $3 per bushel or $138 per tonne is equivalent to hay at $80 per ton on the basis of this five to eight ratio.

The amount of hay to buy will depend on the estimated number of days until spring grass will be available, and the cost of the hay relative to alternatives. If the cost of hay is more than the relative cost of alternative feed sources, reduce the amount of hay purchased to the minimum amount needed.

Mr. Bjorge recommends buying hay by actual weight since estimated weights are often inaccurate. If it's impossible to examine the hay or get feed test data before buying, try to get information from the person who put up the hay. The maturity, percentage of legume and general condition including exposure to weather after baling should be considered.

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Buying hay (cont'd)

Range cubes, alfalfa pellets, oats, wheat and grain corn are all possible alternative feeds. Mr. Bjorge advises anyone unfamiliar with these to consult a livestock nutritionist before using them.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Myron Bjorge
782-4641

For immediate release

Alberta Agriculture film wins award

A Matter of Soil, a new film produced by Tom Dodd of Alberta Agriculture, was chosen best educational film at the Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association (AMPIA) awards held in Edmonton February 16.

The film deals with what Mr. Dodd describes as "a potential agricultural time bomb" - the problem of declining soil fertility. The purpose of the film is to encourage farmers to follow soil management practices that will add or at least maintain organic matter in soils.

Three other Alberta Agriculture films reached final judging in the AMPIA awards, which are given annually to recognize outstanding achievement by Alberta filmmakers. The other finalists were *The Weather Picture,* a half-hour TV special; *Preconditioning,* a promotional film on the preconditioned calf program; and *Brief Encounters,* a film on effective meetings, nominated in the motivational film category and produced for the department by Kicking Horse Productions.

The four films honored by AMPIA are among about 20 films produced during the past year by Alberta Agriculture.

Any of these films can be borrowed free of charge from the department's film library.

This is the second year in a row that an Alberta Agriculture film has won an AMPIA award. Last year Barry Harris produced the award winning short film entitled *The Earl of Sandwich.*

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Tom Dodd
427-2127

February 25, 1985

For immediate release

4-H Premier's award finalists compete on TV

4-H members watching at home can test their 4-H knowledge against that of experts when the TV program *4-H Clubtime* airs its third annual Quiz Kids episode Saturday March 9.

On the program eight competitors will answer questions about 32 4-H projects, and provincial, national and international 4-H activities. Most of the competitors were finalists for the Premier's Award last year, and all are beef club members who are now taking post-secondary education.

The timekeepers for Quiz Kids will be Doug Sawyer of Pine Lake, the 1984 Premier's Award winner; and Elton Dunk, the provincial 4-H agriculture specialist. The quiz master will be Bob Coe, the host and executive producer of *4-H Clubtime.*

Quiz Kids will be shown Saturday March 9 over CFRN-TV, Edmonton at 8:30 a.m.; CFCN-TV, Calgary at 1:00 p.m.; and CKSA-TV, Lloydminster at 12:30 p.m. The program can also be seen in the evening on cable television during the following week. Check local TV listings for the time and channel.

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For further information please contact:

Bob Coe
427-2541

February 25, 1985

For immediate release

New publication lists farm credit sources

Anyone in the market for farm credit may find helpful information in the new edition of the Alberta Agriculture publication entitled *Sources of Farm Business Credit in Alberta.*

The publication outlines farm loan programs available through chartered banks, Treasury Branches, credit unions, the Farm Credit Corporation and the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC). It also advises people on where to seek financing for credit needs that aren't covered by the more traditional agricultural lenders.

The first part of the publication outlines rules for sound use of credit, and points out things that should be considered when dealing with creditors. A chart shows the long-term financing available from various institutions, including their terms of fixed interest rates, and allowances and penalties for prepayment.

Camilla Sawyer of the farm business management branch says several changes have taken place in farm credit since the last edition of *Sources of Farm Business Credit* was printed last June. These changes include ADC's farm development guarantee program which offers up to $100,000 of new operating loan advances to farmers who develop a workable plan and cannot obtain financing elsewhere. ADC now also offers in-depth analysis for farmers in

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immediate financial difficulty. Another change in the publication is that the Bank of Alberta has been added as a source of long-term agricultural credit.

Copies of *Sources of Farm Business Credit in Alberta (Agdex 832)* are available from district agriculturists, the Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1PO, or the publications office in Edmonton.

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For further information please contact:

Camilla Sawyer
556-4240

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February 25, 1985

For immediate release

New fertilizer booklets

Alberta Agriculture's soils branch has just released two booklets to help farmers and others in the industry keep up-to-date with the changing technology in fertilizer handling, storage and application.

Fertilizer Application Equipment (Agdex 542/6) describes the different methods and equipment used to apply fertilizers.

Fertilizers -- Their Properties, Methods of Storage and Handling (Agdex 545/2) describes the properties of fertilizers sold in Alberta, and how they can be stored and handled.

Copies of the booklets are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Ross McKenzie
Soil fertility specialist
Lethbridge
329-5126

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Phone: (403) 427-2121

February 25, 1985

For immediate release

Regional SeCan meetings

SeCan, the national organization that promotes the use of superior crop varieties, will hold two regional meetings for its Alberta members and anyone else interested in the association.

The meetings are scheduled for Thursday February 28 in the Provincial Building in Peace River, and Friday March 1 at the Capri Centre in Red Deer. Both meetings will start at 1:00 p.m., and there's no need to register in advance.

"These meetings should provide an excellent mechanism for SeCan and its members to exchange ideas," says Bill Witbeck, supervisor of seed technology with Alberta Agriculture. SeCan's managing director, the representative for western Canada and provincial directors will attend the meetings. SeCan has more than 500 members in Alberta.

More information is available from Mr. Witbeck at 782-4641.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Bill Witbeck
782-4641

February 25, 1985

For immediate release

Agricultural conference for east-central Alberta

The second annual "Challenge for Change" conference will be held March 6, 1985 in the Castor Community Centre. The purpose of the conference, says Kay Dean, Alberta Agriculture's district home economist at Stettler, is to address new ideas and concerns of particular interest to farm families in east-central Alberta.

The topics to be dealt with at the conference include farm cash planning, harvest management, how diet affects health, computers and farm management, and a look at what's new in alternative crops for the region and protein supplements for beef cattle.

The conference will run from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The cost is $15 per person or $25 per couple. Further information is available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices at Stettler, Sedgewick or Coronation.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Kay Dean
742-4481

February 25, 1985

For immediate release

Loans officers appointed

Frank Blush, the Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) regional manager for the Peace River region, has announced the appointments of two loans officers, Gordon Mittelstadt at Fairview and Ronald Jones at Peace River.

Mr. Mittelstadt grew up on a farm in the Morinville area and in 1968 graduated from the University of Alberta in Edmonton with a degree in agriculture specializing in soil science. He then worked as an agrologist with Alberta Energy and Natural Resources. In 1973 Mr. Mittelstadt joined ADC as regional manager for the Peace River region and served until 1979 when he purchased a farm in the Fairview area. Mr. Mittelstadt is married and has six children.

Mr. Jones was raised in the Consort area. He attended the University of Alberta in 1968, then joined the Royal Bank. Mr. Jones gained extensive agricultural and commercial lending experience during his 13 years of employment with the Royal. He served as loans officer and branch manager in several communities throughout Alberta.

The experience of both men will be beneficial in assisting the present ADC staff in helping to meet the credit needs of the agricultural industry in the Peace, said Mr. Blush in announcing the appointments.

- 30 -

For further information please contact:

Frank Blush
835-4975

AGRI-NEWS

MAR 2 0 1985

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

This Week

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March 4, 1985

For immediate release

ADC interest rate reduction for agribusiness

The Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) has announced changes that will reduce interest costs for its agribusiness borrowers.

Effective March 1, 1985, these borrowers will receive what ADC calls "incentive payments" equal to the lesser of three per cent or the amount necessary to reduce interest rates to 12 per cent. Agribusiness borrowers include agricultural processors, and others, such as veterinarians, who provide services to farmers.

For new direct loans, the reduction will apply for the first five years. For existing loans it will apply for five years ending February 28, 1985.

In announcing the change, Alberta's Minister of Agriculture, LeRoy Fjordbotten, said it will improve cash flow to agribusiness borrowers and provide some stability in interest rates for the five-year period.

- 30 -

Contact:

Peter McNeil
ADC, Camrose
679-1364

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

Supplementing trace minerals through salt

If cattle aren't getting the trace minerals they need through feed or supplements, a salt containing trace minerals can be a convenient alternative provided it contains adequate levels of these minerals.

Dave Plett, the ruminant nutritionist with Alberta Agriculture, says the vast majority of feeds analysed at the Soil and Feed Testing Laboratory are deficient in two trace minerals, zinc and copper.

Salt that provides up to .25 per cent copper and .75 per cent zinc will give cattlemen reasonable assurance that their livestock will not be deficient, says Mr. Plett. He advises producers who want to buy copper- and zinc-supplemented salt to check the tag to make sure that the levels in the salt they buy are close to these. Such suitable levels are commonly found in salt referred to as "trace-mineralized" or "fortified."

Copper is essential for the formation of blood hemoglobin, liver activity and the function of enzymes. Copper deficiency often shows up in loss of coat color, weak bones, diarrhea, general unthriftiness and infertility. Copper is closely related to other elements such as zinc, molybdenum and sulphur; their levels may influence the amount of copper cattle need.

Zinc is essential for protein production and energy utilization. Its activity is concentrated in the pancreas, liver and several glands as well as in bone, teeth and hair.
Because of its close relationship to copper, zinc deficiences are difficult to diagnose from symptoms alone. Low levels may lead to increased incidence of foot rot, reduced growth rate or generally poor performance.

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Supplementing trace minerals through salt (cont'd)

Deficiency of a third trace mineral, selenium, can result in white muscle disease in newborn calves and lambs. Selenium is also important in controlling a form of muscular dystrophy among grazing animals and retained placenta of cows. Selenium is closely related to vitamin E and its levels in forages tend to vary greatly with soil types and climate.

Cattlemen in selenium-deficient areas commonly inject young calves with selenium. A better method, says Mr. Plett, is to feed cows adequate amounts of selenium; they will meet their own requirements and transfer selenium to the fetus and later to the calf through the milk.

Trace mineralized salt that contains 25 parts per million selenium is commonly provided in areas where selenium levels in feed are found to be marginal. In cases of confirmed selemium deficiency, a veterinarian's prescription for supplements with higher levels is required.

Other minerals may be provided via salt. A district agriculturist, regional livestock specialist or qualified nutritionist from a feed company can help to determine the salt and mineral needs of your livestock.

- 30 -

Contact:

Dave Plett
436-9150

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

Poor feeding now jeopardizes 1986 calf crop

Poor nutrition during the last six weeks of pregnancy and early lactation can cause both short- and long-term problems in the beef herd, says Don Scheer, the acting head of Alberta Agriculture's animal nutrition section.

The immediate problems can include an increased rate of abortion, weak calves at birth, increased death loss and lower milk production. Underfeeding cows now will make re-breeding difficult next summer, and result in reduced weaning weights in the fall.

Over the winter it's advisable to feed cows lower quality roughages first and save better feeds for the last month of pregnancy and the early part of lactation, says Mr. Scheer. Cows need adequate levels of protein, calcium and phosphorus during late pregnancy in order to establish good milk flow.

For calves, a poor supply of milk will reduce growth rates and result in smaller weaning weights. A lack of protein, calcium and phosphorus in the cow's ration will also reduce the production of colostrum, the calf's sole source of immunoglobulins. This will reduce the calf's passive immunity and increase its susceptibility to scours and other diseases.

Underfeeding during late pregnancy and after calving can also delay the cow exhibiting the signs of her first estrus (heat) during the following breeding season. Marginal deficiencies can result in weak and irregular heat periods, reduced conception rates and lower calf crops next spring.

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Poor feeding now jeopardizes 1986 calf crop (cont'd)

Mature cows in good condition can lose 10 per cent of their body weight during the winter without any ill effects. Cows that gain weight during the last six weeks of pregnancy and after calving tend to re-breed earlier. Cows must be bred within 85 days of calving if they are to produce a calf every 12 months.

- 30 -

This is the third in a series of four articles on the feed shortage.
Next week: Your problems don't end once the cows are on grass.

Contact:

Don Scheer
436-9150

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

New, improved pea sheller plan

Ralph and Pearl Hillaby of Marwayne, Alberta load the drum of their pea sheller. The plans for building a sheller like this are available free from Alberta Agriculture's engineering branch.

It really works! The Hillaby Sheller can shell about six quarts of peas in about a minute. Using plans from Alberta Agriculture an experienced carpenter can build a pea sheller like this in 15 - 20 hours.

See story next page.

Alberta
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New improved pea sheller plan

Alberta Agriculture's engineering branch has released a new, slightly simplified version of its plans showing how to build a pea sheller that can shell about six quarts of peas in one minute.

The branch first offered blueprints for building the pea sheller in June 1984, and by the end of the summer had been swamped by more than 4,000 requests. "Clearly, shelling peas by hand is not a popular activity," says engineer Wendy McLeod.

So, as a result of continuing interest in the sheller, the engineering branch has prepared an eight-page fact sheet on pea sheller construction and operation. The publication contains information, complete plans and for doubters, photographs of a pea sheller in action. (Difficult as it is to imagine, the pea sheller does not smash, squash or break the peas.)

The new plans have also been improved to make the sheller a little easier to build. Even so, warns Ms. McLeod, building a sheller isn't easy. It will take a good carpenter 15 to 20 hours from start to finish.

Anyone who would like a free copy of the building plans can write to the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6, and ask for *Agdex 747-1, the Home Built Pea Sheller.*

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Contact:

Wendy McLeod
427-2181

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

Publication lists assistance for farmers

The 1985 edition of the Alberta Agriculture publication *Assistance Available to Alberta Farmers* is now available. It updates information on assistance from the provincial and federal governments, and includes eight programs that have been added since last year.

Camilla Sawyer of the farm business management branch says that in total, the publication outlines the terms and qualifications for 55 assistance programs that involve every major sector of agriculture.

The new programs listed in the publication include rural electrification assistance loans at 3½ per cent for terms of 10 or 25 years; the Alberta youth employment and training program, which reimburses up to 50 per cent of wage; and the federal excise tax refund on gasoline which gives farmers a rebate of 4.8 cents per litre on fuel they buy for off-highway use.

Copies of *Assistance Available to Alberta Farmers (Agdex 871)* are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices, the publications office in Edmonton or the Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1PO.

- 30 -

Contact:

Camilla Sawyer
556-4240

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

Starting transplants indoors

Growing your own flower and vegetable transplants from seed has several advantages, says Lorraine Taylor of Alberta Agriculture's Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre.

You'll get the cultivars you want, the quantity you want, and you're likely to save money. What's more, this early indoor gardening can be fun, says Mrs. Taylor.

March and early April are when many flowers and vegetables must be started in order to be ready for setting out in May.

The seeding date is very important. Plants seeded too early may become large and unmanageable, while those seeded late will be slow. Ideally, flowers should just be forming buds when the plants are set outside.

Seeding dates depend on when the plants can be set outdoors, the amount of light and the temperature of the house. *The Alberta Horticultural Guide* from Alberta Agriculture lists suggested seeding dates for commonly grown plants.

Plenty of light is necessary in order to grow transplants or they may become leggy and weak. A sunny, south-facing window or greenhouse is ideal, says Mrs. Taylor. Fluorescent lamps with a mixture of warm white and cool white tubes also work well. The lamps should be placed 20 to 30 centimetres above the plants, and should be left on 14 to 16 hours a day. The room temperature needs to be 18^{o} to 21^{o}C.

A good potting mix for growing transplants can be made using one part soil, one part peat moss and one part sand. Mrs. Taylor says that if you use garden soil, pasteurize it first by putting it in the oven at 85^{o}C for one hour.

Many types of containers are suitable for growing transplants provided they have drainage holes. If the containers have been used before, they should be washed and soaked in a dilute bleach solution.

- (cont'd) -

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Starting transplants indoors (cont'd)

When the seeds are sown, they should be covered with a fine layer of screened soil, peat or sand, and watered with a gentle mist or placed in a pan of water so that the water can be soaked up from below. Cover the containers with glass or plastic until the seeds germinate.

When the seedlings get their first true leaves, they should be "pricked out" and spaced further apart so they have room to grow. (The first set of leaves are called the seed leaves; the second set are called the true leaves.) Gently lift the seedling by a leaf and set it back into the soil at the same depth it was growing before. Space the plants five to seven centimetres apart.

Some plants, like cucumbers, squash and melon, don't transplant well and should be seeded into peat pots that can be set right into the garden. With these plants, seed two or three seeds in each pot. Once they germinate, select the healthiest seedling and cut off the others.

Transplants should be fertilized every two weeks with a fertilizer dissolved in water. Mrs. Taylor recommends alternating 10-52-10 and 20-20-20.

Plants must be hardened off or acclimatized before they are planted outside. Do this by reducing the amount of water you give them, and putting them outside during the day. A cold frame --a glass or plastic box with a lid that can be opened during the day and closed at night -- works well.

- 30 -

Contact:

Lorraine Taylor
973-3351

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

Field crops seminar in central Alberta

A three-day seminar will be held in Lacombe March 19 to 21 to provide the latest information on field crops.

The seminar is being sponsored by Alberta Agriculture in cooperation with agribusiness. Neil Miller, district agriculturist at Lacombe, says the seminar will cover the best crop varieties for the area, fertilizer application, weeds, insects, diseases, economics and marketing. The speakers will include staff from the federal research station at Lacombe, Alberta Agriculture, and producer organizations.

The seminar will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily. The advance registration is required; the fee is $25 per person. Registration is limited to the first 100 prepaid participants. To register, contact the Alberta Agriculture district office at Lacombe, 782-3301.

- 30 -

Contact:

Neil Miller
782-3301

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

Pasture management seminar

More than anything else, successful pasture management requires foresight. What will the stand be like in several years? What has been done to ensure its continued productivity?

Pasture for this season and the next 20 is the theme of a seminar scheduled for Donalda March 26. The seminar is being sponsored by Alberta Agriculture's district agriculturists in Camrose, Stettler, Sedgewick and Coronation and the Agricultural Society at Donalda.

Speakers will discuss the role of fertilizers in maintaining productive pastures, the impact of various soil conditions upon pasture and techniques to improve them, management techniques to make a pasture stand last, and the economics of pasture management.

The registration fee for the seminar is $10 per person; advance registration is advised. To register, contact one of these district offices: Camrose, 679-1210; Stettler, 742-4481; Sedgewick, 384-3737; or Coronation, 578-3970.

- 30 -

Contact:

Andy Birch
District Agriculturist
Stettler
742-4481

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

Peat soil management seminar

It's estimated that in the area between Barrhead and St. Paul there are 750,000 acres of peat or organic soils. With an ever-increasing number of these acres being farmed, new methods of improving productivity are needed.

A seminar planned for Westlock March 27 will highlight some of these methods. The keynote speaker will be Bruno Sterckeman of the Manitoba Peatland Farming Association, who will outline the successful work that has been done on peatland in that province.

Other topics and speakers include the history and development of peat soils, Gary Coy, Alberta Agriculture; the fertility of peat soils, Doug Penny, Alberta Agriculture; deep plowing of peat soils, Ross Smith, a grain grower in the Jarvie area: scraping and rotovating of peat soils, Rod Carlyon, district agriculturist (DA) at Westlock; and the results of tests of copper fertilizer in peat soil plots, Rick Bjorge, DA at Westlock.

The registration fee for the seminar is $5. Registration is being taken at Alberta Agriculture's district office at Westlock; the phone number is 349-4465.

- 30 -

Contact:

Rick Bjorge
349-4465

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

DA appointed in Manning

The appointment of Elaine Ryl as district agriculturist in Manning was announced recently by Don Young, Alberta Agriculture's director for the Peace Region. Ms. Ryl graduated from the University of Alberta in 1977 with a B.Sc. in agriculture majoring in animal science.

Ms. Ryl then worked for two years at the University of Alberta on canola feeding research, and then spent one year working with Unifeed. For the past five years she has been employed as the manager of the Pembina Forage Association out of Westlock. During her time with the organization it has demonstrated the benefits of intensive pasture management.

Ms. Ryl has a farming background, coming from a mixed cow-calf operation near Boyle. She still maintains an active interest in the family farm.

- 30 -

Contact:

Elaine Ryl
836-3351

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

District agriculturist appointed to Two Hills

Shane Dobson has been appointed Alberta Agriculture's district agriculturist at Two Hills. Ralph Berkan, the department's regional director at Vermilion, announced the appointment.

Mr. Dobson graduated from the University of Manitoba in 1982 with a B.Sc. in agriculture specializing in animal science. He joined Alberta Agriculture later that year as a district agriculturist at Athabasca, and has held that position until now.

Mr. Dobson replaces Ron Bazylo who transferred to Vermilion as the regional swine specialist.

- 30 -

Contact:

Shane Dobson
657-3311

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

Loans officer appointed to Red Deer

Ken Friesen, the Agricultural Development Corporation's (ADC) regional manager at Red Deer, has announced the appointment of Lavern Doran as loans officer at Red Deer.

Mr. Doran was raised on a mixed farm in the Ponoka area and graduated from the University of Alberta in 1964 with B.Sc. He has worked as an agricultural lender for a number of years in Alberta with the Farm Credit Corporation and the Federal Development Bank.

- 30 -

Contact:

Lavern Doran
340-5326

March 4, 1985

For immediate release

District agriculturist transfers to Vermilion

Josie Van Lent has been appointed district agriculturist (DA) at Alberta Agriculture's office in Vermilion. Her transfer from Wainwright is announced by Ralph Berkan, the department's regional director.

Miss Van Lent graduated from the University of Alberta with a B.Sc. in agriculture in 1982. She worked on a Farming for the Future project before joining Alberta Agriculture as a DA-in-training at Lloydminster. She transferred to the Wainwright office in April 1984.

Miss Van Lent replaces George Rock who moved to the Camrose district office.

- 30 -

Contact:

Josie Van Lent
853-2811

AGRI-NEWS

For immediate release

March 11, 1985

This Week

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March 11, 1985

For immediate release

More dry weather ahead

This summer is likely to bring more hot, dry weather to Alberta, not just to the southern regions, but to central Alberta and to some extent the north as well.

So says Richard Shields, an agro-meteorologist with Sparks Commodities of Memphis, Tennessee. Mr. Shields made that forecast at Accent '85, an Alberta Agriculture outlook conference held March 5 in Lethbridge and attended by about 260 people.

The dryness will probably be as bad as last year, and although temperatures aren't likely to be as hot as early in the year, by mid-summer Alberta will have above-normal temperatures, said Mr. Shields.

Spring is likely to bring timely rains "a teaser," said Mr. Shields -- which will allow crops to come up and establish a stand. After that, however, the dry weather can be expected to set in.

Northern Alberta may not suffer as much from dry weather because that region may get enough moisture out of the Northwest Territories to keep crops going.

The dry weather, said Mr. Shields, is likely to cover Alberta, Saskatchewan and western Manitoba; areas further east can expect more normal rainfall and temperatures.

On the more positive side is that 1985 should be the last of what Mr. Shields says is a five- to seven-year cycle, and weather should begin to improve in 1986.

- 30 -

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Richard Shields
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or

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For immediate release

Early pricing of new canola crop advised

Paul Cassidy, a regional manager with Palliser Grain Co. Ltd. recommends that farmers price new crop canola on any price rallies, particularly when futures prices rise above $400.

"Europe is on its way to another record crop, palm oil production has increased and world oilseed stocks will increase. For these reasons I'd suggest pricing a portion of next year's production," Mr. Cassidy told farmers attending Accent '85, Alberta Agriculture's grains and oilseeds outlook conference March 6 in Lethbridge.

Canada's canola acreage could reduced by as much as 20 per cent in 1985, Mr. Cassidy predicted. With good weather, he said, the crop could yield three million tonnes. "That would not be burdensome and would allow crushers and exporters to pursue new markets," he said.

The granting of "generally regarded as safe" or GRAS status to canola oil by the USDA is one of the bright spots for developing new markets for the upcoming crop year, Mr. Cassidy said. But, he warned, international market competition will be stiff because of record world oilseed production, and the demand for Canadian canola will likely be limited to Japan. "Because of the Japanese demand for oil and its current surplus meal problem, Japan's canola imports will probably increase at the expense of soybeans," he said.

In the short term, tight supplies of soy oil will keep canola prices from falling dramatically, although Mr. Cassidy said he doubts there will be any strong rallies in prices. Increased farmer selling, pressure from the South American soybean harvest, and competition from Europe and Malaysian palm oil will burden prices in April to June.

- 30 -

Contact:

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March 11, 1985

For immediate release

Barley prices strong to mid-summer

Barley prices at Alberta's feedlots and feedmills are likely to stay strong until mid-summer, and then drop to about $97 per tonne once harvest begins.

That's the prediction of Lynn Malmberg, a grains analyst with *Grainews,* and one of the speakers at Alberta Agriculture's outlook conference, Accent '85, held in Lethbridge March 5 and 6.

Mr. Malmberg forecast a three per cent increase in Canadian barley acreage this year, prompted both by the high final payment producers received this winter, and the current strong non-board prices. A 45-bushel yield would bring total supplies to about 13.5 million tonnes.

Feed, seed and industrial use isn't likely to change much, but the big question mark for the 1985-86 crop will be exports, and the degree to which they can rebound from the low levels of 1984-85. Mr. Malmberg said there is the possibility of increased competition from feed grains in the United States. Further devaluation of the Canadian dollar could help to support Canadian export prices relative to U.S. corn prices.

- 30 -

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March 11, 1985

For immediate release

New economic rules for agriculture

Canadian agriculture will have to adjust to a new set of business rules for the last half of this decade, says Pat Moncrieff, senior manager of agriculture with the Bank of Montreal.

Those rules, which Mr. Moncrieff calls "the new realities," consist of high real interest rates, low inflation, asset values in line with productive values, low growth in the demand for farm products, and intense commodity sales competition.

All this will lead to continuing pressure on farm operating margins, he told farmers at Accent '85, Alberta Agriculture's annual grains and oilseeds outlook conference in Lethbridge March 5.

The past five years, says Mr. Moncrieff, have been a time of economic turbulence in which many basic business assumptions were proven inadequate but in which it wasn't clear what would replace them.

Now, he says, the wide fluctuations in the major economic factors appear to have ended and farmers can begin thinking about their strategies for the rest of the 1980s.

- 30 -

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March 11, 1985

For immediate release

World feedgrain outlook gloomy

World feedgrain prices are likely to decline slightly in the 1985-86 crop year, an American analyst told farmers attending an Alberta Agriculture market outlook conference in Lethbridge March 6.

As an example, said Maury Brannan, barley prices in the United States can be expected to average $2.25 to $2.35 a bushel in 1985-86 compared with an estimate of $2.30 to $2.35 a bushel for the present crop year.

Mr. Brannan said that although world feedgrain stocks will be relatively low by the end of this crop year, the further outlook may be one of increased supplies of coarse grains, especially in the U.S., U.S.S.R. and Canada.

Yield gains in wheat varieties, especially in the U.S., EEC and Australia, will lead to greater competition among grains.

Mr. Brannan predicted a reduction in world coarse grain trade, mostly because of reduced Soviet imports. The world demand for feedgrains in the 1984-85 crop year, he said, is limited by the weak recovery in overseas economies and a lacklustre livestock economy.

- 30 -

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March 11, 1985

For immediate release

World wheat situation may turn around

"The world wheat situation may begin to turn around during the 1985-86 crop year," said the director of market analysis for the Canadian Wheat Board, at Accent '85, Alberta Agriculture's annual grains outlook conference.

Bob Roehle forecast that world consumption of wheat in 1985-86 could exceed production for the first time since the 1980-81 crop year. This outlook, however, depends on continued improvement in the world economy; and at best, prices will be only a little stronger.

Prospects for the 1985-86 wheat crop are generally favorable now, with winter wheat in the northern hemisphere in good condition, despite extreme cold in parts of the U.S.S.R. and Europe in January. The Soviet wheat crop is expected to fare better than in recent years. Mr. Roehle suggested that in the United States the 1985 wheat harvest is likely to be between 65 and 71 million tonnes.

Improvements in world wheat consumption, he said, could result from better economic conditions in middle income nations. "Although international trade may be somewhat lower because of reduced Soviet imports, overall levels of consumption will improve." International prices may rise occasionally above the floor provided by the American farm support programs. For Canada, changes in the exchange rate could have a significant impact on farmer returns.

- 30 -

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or

David Walker
Alberta Agriculture
427-7132

For immediate release

Thin cows need extra feed on breeding pasture

Will winter ever end? Even when it does, and cattle are on spring pasture, this winter's feed shortage may still have some implications, says Don Scheer, the acting head of Alberta Agriculture's animal nutrition section.

The condition of cows at breeding affects their reproductive performance in several ways. Cows in poor condition will need more services per conception, have a prolonged calving interval and are more likely to be open in the fall.

It's easy to judge which cows are in adequate condition at breeding, says Mr. Scheer. The vertebrae in the lumbar region (between the last rib and the pelvis) can be felt individually, but feel rounded instead of sharp. There is some tissue cover around the tail head, over the hip bones and the flank. The individual ribs are not obvious.

If cows can be placed on new pasture three to four weeks before breeding, they will start gaining weight and show improved reproductive performance. But depending on the severity of the cow's condition and the supply of pasture, the herd may have to be fed grain (2.6 to 5 kilograms per head per day) in order to build up an acceptable body condition prior to breeding. Grain is also a good source of phosphorus, which is needed to ensure early rebreeding, says Mr. Scheer. If grain is not fed, another source of phosphorus must be supplied.

In all areas of Alberta, several trace minerals must be supplemented to promote optimum reproductive performance in cattle. These trace minerals can be supplied by the new trace mineralized salts and some commercial mineral mixes.

- (cont'd) -

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Thin cows need extra feed on breeding pasture (cont'd)

Creep feeding nursing calves is another way to reduce the nutritional pressure on the cow and help improve her body condition. It isn't as effective, however, as supplementing the cow's pasture diet directly with grain, says Mr. Scheer.

A typical 14 per cent crude protein beef creep ration consists of 40 per cent rolled barley, 50 per cent whole oats and 10 per cent pelleted canola meal. Calves should be introduced to the creep feed slowly. Creep areas do not have to be elaborate, and work best on small pastures.

The uncertain reproductive performance of thin cows at breeding makes pregnancy checking necessary in the fall. At that time open cows can be culled to avoid the expensive practice of feeding non-producers all winter.

- 30 -

Contact:

Don Scheer
436-9150

For immediate release

Growing HY320 wheat

Murray McLelland, the supervisor of cereal crops with Alberta Agriculture, offers this advice to producers intending to grow HY320, the semi-dwarf wheat recently licensed in Canada.

- The seed must be treated every year with a systemic fungicide to control loose smut and bunt since this variety is susceptible to these diseases.

- Use a higher seeding rate for HY320 than normal for spring wheat. The average kernel size of HY320 is larger than that of spring wheat, which means there are fewer seeds per bushel. A seeding rate of one-quarter to one-half bushel per acre above the rate of hard red spring wheat has been found to be appropriate.

- Seed HY320 early, because it matures late, about the same as Glenlea-Columbus. This is especially important in areas of Alberta like the parkland and the north, where the growing season is shorter.

- HY320, like other semi-dwarf wheats, does not tolerate deep seeding as well as hard red spring wheats, and must be seeded shallow (2-2½ inches maximum), to obtain uniform, vigorous seedling stands, uniform maturity and maximum yields.

- HY320 is less competitive with weeds than regular spring wheat varieties. Good weed control is therefore essential. Broadleaf weed control herbicides suitable for hard red spring wheat are also suitable for HY320. Triallate and trifluralin should be incorporated shallowly to permit the placement of HY320 seed below the treated layer, and to take into account its shallow seeding requirement. Deep-seeded HY320 seems less tolerant to emerging through the treated layer than Neepawa, yet more tolerant than Neepawa when seeded shallow.

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Growing HY320 wheat (cont'd)

- HY320, with its short, strong, stiff straw, has very good lodging resistance. Provided other growth factors are not limiting, particularly moisture, one might consider pushing HY320 with fertilizer further than other crops which are less resistant to lodging.

- HY320 is suitable for straight combining with its strong, short straw and good resistance to shattering. Since HY320 has an awned (bearded) head, the swath will be fluffy and easy to pick up. A fluffy swath has greater risk of wind damage, however. To reduce this risk, HY320 should be swathed at 30 per cent to 35 per cent kernel moisture to promote maximum initial swath settling.

- HY320 is reported to be easy to thresh.

- The straw feed value of HY320 is better than Neepawa and equal to high quality barley-oat straw, with a protein content of about 4.3 per cent and organic matter digestibility of about 46 per cent.

- HY320 is a triple M wheat (medium hardness, protein and gluten). It yields 25 per cent to 30 per cent more than Neepawa. On irrigated land HY320 can be expected to yield about three per cent more than the soft white spring wheat Fielder.

- HY320 has a milling quality more like hard red winter wheat than hard red spring wheat, and will sell at a price disadvantage. In 1985 HY320 is expected to sell for about $8 per tonne less than Number 3 hard red spring wheat. A new class of wheat grade will be established for HY320 before harvest.

- 30 -

Contact:

Murray McLelland
782-4641

March 11, 1985

For immediate release

New chairman appointed for Alberta Grain Commission

David J. Clarke

LeRoy Fjordbotten, Alberta's minister of agriculture, has announced the appointment of David J. Clarke as chairman of the Alberta Grain Commission, effective April 1, 1985.

Mr. Clarke graduated from the University of Manitoba with a master's degree in agricultural economics, majoring in marketing and transportation. Since then, his career has been exclusively in agriculture, much of it in the grains area.

Prior to joining Alberta Agriculture in 1980, Mr. Clarke spent three years with the market analysis division of the Canadian Wheat Board. He spent one of those years in London, England studying the international grain trade. He worked for three years in the grain marketing office of the federal department of industry, trade and commerce; two years as a special assistant to Otto Lang, a former minister of the Canadian Wheat Board; and two years with the Trade Commissioner Service in Tokyo.

During his time with the federal government Mr. Clarke was seconded to the Food Prices Review Board and the Commission of Inquiry for the Marketing of Beef and Veal.

- (cont'd) -

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New chairman appointed for Alberta Grain Commission (cont'd)

His most recent experience has been with the market development division of Alberta Agriculture where he has further developed his marketing experience and knowledge both in domestic and international fields. For the past year Mr. Clarke has been Alberta's representative on the Canola Council of Canada's board of directors.

Mr. Fjordbotten said he had worked with Mr. Clarke during a trade mission to the Pacific Rim in 1984. "I was impressed by his communication and leadership skills as well as his technical knowledge of the grain industry," said the minister. "Mr. Clarke's understanding of grain production, transportation and marketing issues makes him well qualified for the position of chairman of the Alberta Grain Commission."

The commission gives advice and recommendations to the minister of agriculture on issues affecting the grains and oilseeds industry, and works toward the creation of an economic environment within which all producers can maximize their income.

- 30 -

Contact:

David J. Clarke
427-4241

March 11, 1985

For immediate release

New manager appointed for Irrigation Secretariat

Gerhardt Hartman

Dr. Art Olson, Alberta Agriculture's assistant deputy minister for research and resource development, has announced the appointment of Gerhardt Hartman to the position of manager of the irrigation secretariat and secretary to the Irrigation Council of Alberta.

Mr. Hartman, whose appointment is effective April 1, succeeds Robert F. Smith who retired in January.

The department's irrigation secretariat, located in Lethbridge, provides staff support to the Irrigation Council. The council, which reports to the minister of agriculture, is responsible for effecting a sound irrigation policy, and for administering Alberta's Irrigation Act and any agreements between the province and the irrigation districts.

Dr. Olson noted that Mr. Hartman's extensive experience with the irrigation industry, farmers and government administration will stand him in good stead in his new position.

- (cont'd) -

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New manager appointed for Irrigation Secretariat (cont'd)

A graduate in agricultural engineering from the University of Saskatchewan, Mr. Hartman was born in LaFleche, Saskatchewan and was raised on a farm in the southern part of that province.

Mr. Hartman started his career in the irrigation sector in Lethbridge in 1961, beginning as a sales engineer with Oliver Chemical Company. In 1965 he joined Alberta Agriculture as an irrigation specialist in Medicine Hat, and later served with Alberta Environment in Edmonton.

In 1976 Mr. Hartman returned to Lethbridge as a section head with Alberta Agriculture's irrigation division. In 1983, he joined the conservation and development branch which was formed when the department created the new research and resource development sector.

As head of the branch's irrigation systems section, Mr. Hartman was responsible for administering research activities and technology transfer related to the conservation and development of soil and water.

- 30 -

Contact:

Dr. Art Olson
427-1957

March 11, 1985

For immediate release

New fact sheet on fertilizer application

The latest research in Alberta shows that the timing and method of applying nitrogen fertilizers have a great influence on their effectiveness. The net returns from nitrogen fertilizers can, in fact, double if the best application method is used.

The research findings of both public and private agencies supported by Farming for the Future are summarized in Alberta Agriculture's new fact sheet, *Applying Fertilizers Effectively*.

Broadcasting nitrogen fertilizer in the fall was found to be the least effective means of application under most conditions. Deep banding -- placing an ammonium form of nitrogen in bands four to five inches deep and 12 to 18 inches wide -- improved the effectiveness of fall application. Deep banding improved the effectiveness of both fall and spring application of fertilizer when rainfall was low during the early part of the growing season.

The research showed, as well, that the use of fertilizer nitrogen is affected by three key factors: soil moisture during spring thaw, soil drainage characteristics, and rainfall during the early part of the growing season.

The fact sheet outlines four soil-climatic categories in Alberta, and compares in each of them the relative effectiveness of nitrogen that has been spring broadcast, spring banded, fall broadcast and fall banded. It also explains why banding often improves the

- (cont'd) -

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effectiveness of nitrogen fertilizers, and compares the effectiveness of phosphate banded with nitrogen to phosphate placed in the seed row.

Copies of *Applying Fertilizers Effectively (Agdex 542-7)* are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices or the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

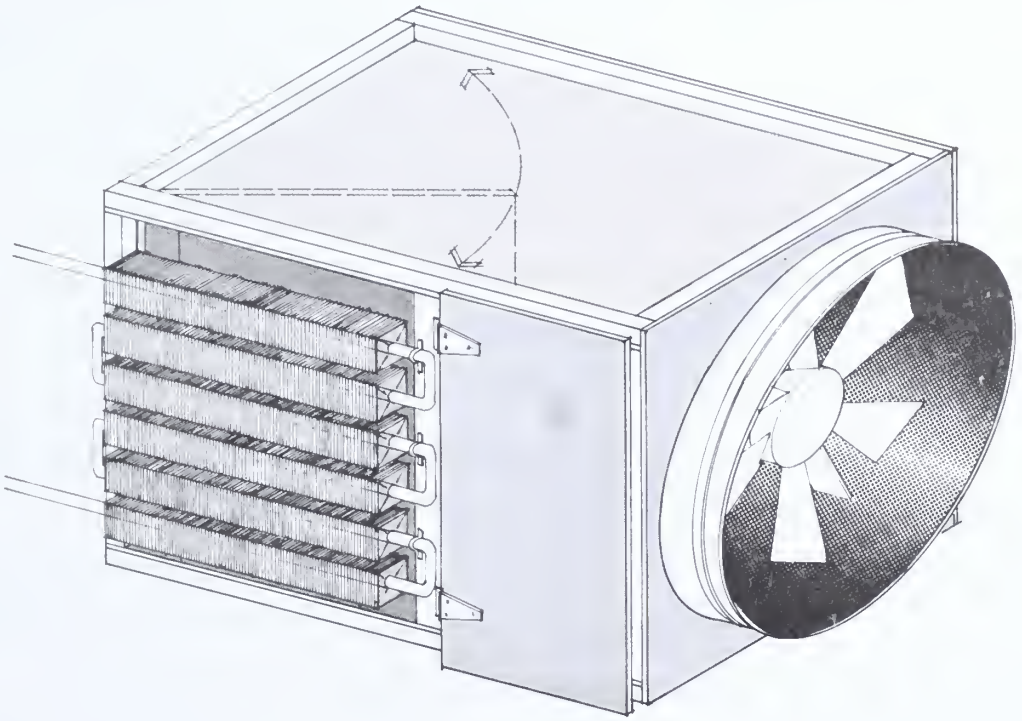
Contact:

Douglas C. Penney
427-5346

March 11, 1985

For immediate release

Build your own air mixing chamber



Air mixing chamber for plastic tube ventilation systems - the newest building plan available from Alberta Agriculture's engineering branch.

A new publication by Alberta Agriculture's engineering branch describes how to construct, install and operate an air mixing chamber for plastic tube ventilation systems. The ventilation system detailed in this publication is often used in calf barns or other small- to medium-sized buildings. It will take about 12 hours to build the chamber. Free copies of this publication can be obtained from the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 by asking for *Agdex 717-10, Air Mixing Chamber.*

- 30 -

Contact:

Brian Kennedy
Vermilion, 853-2811

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March 11, 1985

For immediate release

Annual warble inspection underway

During March, April and May all cattle sold at auction markets and terminal stockyards in Alberta will be checked for warbles.

Agricultural fieldmen will then follow up by visiting farms that are found to be sources of warble-infested cattle, to advise producers on warble control.

This annual inspection is a simple and cost-effective way of helping to control warbles, says Ali Khan, the livestock pest specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Although the number of warble-infested slaughter cattle in Alberta has dropped from 14 per cent in 1980 to two per cent in 1984, the pest still has the potential to re-infest Alberta cattle and cause heavy losses again if cattle are not treated every fall.

Dr. Khan points out that The Agricultural Pest Act requires all producers to treat their cattle annually for warbles. All counties, municipal districts, improvement districts and special areas in Alberta are official warble control areas.

At packing plants, cattle carcasses are also monitored for warbles every spring. Information about the sources of warble infestations is used by agricultural service boards in their extension education programs.

- 30 -

Contact:

Ali Khan
427-9051

March 11, 1985

For immediate release

Pedigreed seed production workshop

In order to produce good seed for their own use or for sale to neighbors, farmers must be aware of some guidelines.

Alberta Agriculture's district agriculturists at Lacombe are planning a pedigreed seed production workshop on Wednesday April 3, for commercial farmers who want to learn about those guidelines and other aspects of seed production.

Topics to be covered include the role of the Canada Seeds Act, Agriculture Canada, the Canadian Seed Growers' Association and SeCan; rules and regulations; seed analysis and Certificate of Analysis; and over-delivery quotas.

There is no charge for the workshop. It will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Agriculture Building in Lacombe.

- 30 -

Contact:

Neil Miller or Stuart Tucker
District agriculturists, Lacombe
782-3301

March 11, 1985

For immediate release

Apply now for 4-H scholarships

The Alberta Agriculture 4-H branch is now accepting applications for scholarships. July 15 is the deadline for all but one scholarship, the CNE scholarship, and the deadline for that one is June 15.

4-H members from across Alberta have an opportunity to receive any of 31 different scholarships amounting to $20,150. Each has different criteria that members must meet. These may include the program of study, year, geographic location, number of years and achievement in 4-H, community involvement, academic standing and leadership abilities.

4-H scholarships are provided by individuals, provincial and national organizations, and Alberta Agriculture. Elizabeth Webster, Alberta Agriculture's personal development specialist, encourages 4-H members to apply for scholarships. She says, "We consider community work and 4-H achievement as well as academic performance in selecting winners. All those years of experience count!"

1985 4-H scholarship information and application forms are available from district home economists, regional 4-H specialists and the 4-H Branch, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

Elizabeth Webster
427-2541

Correction: In Agri-News March 4, 1985, the article titled *ADC interest rate reduction for agribusiness* should have read:

For new direct loans, the reduction will apply for the first five years. For existing loans it will apply for five years ending February 28, 1990.

AGRI-NEWS

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March 18, 1985

For immediate release

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March 18, 1985

For immediate release

Alberta government supports rail rate incentives

On March 7 the Alberta government submitted a brief to the Canadian Transport Commission (CTC) supporting an application that would bring about a reduction in the rail rates for certain types of grain shipped from three points in western Canada.

The government's position was outlined in a brief prepared jointly by the departments of agriculture and economic development.

"Our support of the incentive rates wasn't necessarily limited to the specific application before the CTC," says Doug Radke, an assistant deputy minister with Alberta Agriculture. "Rather, the government supports the concept of using the rail rate system to increase efficiency within the grain transportation sector."

The Alberta government favors payment of the Crow Benefit to the farmer, but under the Western Grain Transportation Act it is paid to the railways. "The only opportunity within the Act that offers the potential for increased efficiency is Section 45, which deals with rates that can be negotiated between shippers for off-peak periods," said Mr. Radke. "The essence of the application from Northern Sales, Cargill and Canadian National Railways is to do just that. To the extent that CN can increase its efficiency and reduce costs to the grain companies, the companies will pass those reductions on to the producer."

Mr. Radke rejected the suggestion that producers who are not near the delivery points to which incentive rates would apply would somehow be disadvantaged.

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Alberta government supports rail rate incentives (cont'd)

"Just because the rate at Edmonton would be reduced doesn't mean it would increase somewhere else," he said. "No one further from Edmonton would be worse off. As well, there's provision within the Western Grain Transportation Act for costing reviews every four years so that savings made at points in the system will be passed on to the entire system."

- 30 -

Contact:

Doug Radke
422-1072

For immediate release

Farmers favor payment of Crow Benefit to farmers

A survey recently completed for Alberta Agriculture shows that 70 per cent of Alberta farmers favor payment of the Crow Benefit directly to producers instead of railways.

"That 70 per cent is significant, especially when you note that only nine per cent of the farmers surveyed didn't express an opinion on the issue," says Doug Radke, an assistant deputy minister with Alberta Agriculture.

According to the survey, farmers see two main benefits of the payment going to producers: more diversification for the western agricultural industry including secondary processing, and increased livestock production.

The survey, conducted among 611 farmers in all areas of Alberta, showed surprisingly consistent views about payment of the Crow Benefit among farmers in different regions, and between grain and livestock producers, said Mr. Radke.

He added the survey identified six matters on which farmers need more information. They are the costs of transporting grain (only 15 per cent now know what it costs); the major review of the Western Grain Transportation Act (WGTA), which will take place in 1985-86; the provincial government's position on the method of payment of the Crow Benefit; the effects of the WGTA on individual farms; the marketing system for export grains; and the opportunities for secondary processing in western Canada.

- 30 -

Contact:

Doug Radke
422-1072

For immediate release

Don't leave cows in second stage labor

Because of the cold stress of the severe winter and inadequate rations many pregnant cows have had, cattle producers can expect an increased number of low viability or weak calves.

Dr. George Klavano of Alberta Agriculture's animal health division recommends that given the conditions this year, producers should check cows in labor more frequently, and if necessary, intervene early in the birth.

Older cows should be examined after half an hour of second stage labor, and heifers after three-quarters of an hour. If the cervix is dilated, the birth process may be started. Many times when a foot or head of the calf is manipulated along with cervical stimulation the cow will start third stage labor.

"Many stockmen leave cows in the second stage of labor for two to four hours," says Dr. Klavano. This can be too long in cows with weak calves, especially if the calf is premature or large. Premature or large calves are 17 per cent more likely to die at birth than other calves.

When a cow is in second stage labor for too long, there's a possibility of early placental detachment which may produce hypoxia (lack of oxygen). Inadequate nutrition at the mid-point of gestation may have caused placental insufficiency, another factor in low viability calves.

Weak calves are generally both hypoxic and hypothermic (with low body temperature), both of which may be avoided by a faster birth. When a calf is hypoxic or hypothermic one condition augments the other and the fetal vascular shunts may reopen, aggravating both conditions.

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Don't leave cows in second stage labor (cont'd)

Much emphasis has been placed on colostral milk and various vitamins and minerals, but of utmost importance is providing warmth and oxygen. Dr. Klavano recommends clearing the mucus from the upper respiratory tract by brisk rubbing and administering oxygen, if it is available, to stabilize the calf -- then these other essential factors may be addressed.

- 30 -

Contact:

Dr. George Klavano
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March 18, 1985

For immediate release

Dehy alfalfa may be a good buy

Dehydrated alfalfa products may be a better buy than baled hay during the last days of winter, suggests Don Scheer, the acting head of Alberta Agriculture's animal nutrition section.

At the end of February, more than 15,000 tonnes of pellets and cubes were available from plants throughout the province. The prices f.o.b. the processor ranged from $138 to $164 per tonne for dehy pellets, $127 to $160 per tonne for suncured pellets and $140 to $150 per tonne for alfalfa cubes.

When comparing the costs of pellets and cubes, remember that alfalfa products have several physical advantages over long hay:

- pellets and cubes are more suitable for mechanized handling
- the greater bulk density of pellets and cubes reduces the storage requirements and transportation costs
- there can be less waste and spoilage with cubes and pellets
- pellets and cubes mix well with silage, and pellets mix well with concentrate.

Alfalfa cubes can comprise the entire roughage portion of cattle and sheep diets. Although dehy and suncured pellets can form a significant part of cattle and sheep diets, these products are seldom fed free-choice. When cattle and sheep are fed low protein feeds, high protein feed such as alfalfa is needed for the animals to use the lower quality feeds efficiently and to prevent rumen compaction.

When feeding straw or poor quality hay (four or five per cent protein), as little as 3.5 to 4 kilograms of alfalfa pellets are needed to meet the daily protein requirements of

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Dehy alfalfa may be a good buy (cont'd)

lactating beef cows and 1.5 to 2 kilograms for lactating ewes.

Alfalfa cubes and pellets have the additional advantage of being high in many minerals and vitamins, and pellets can be a good source of rumen by-pass protein.

When formulating rations with high levels of alfalfa, the calcium: phosphorus ratio must be balanced carefully. Alfalfa is an excellent source of calcium and if fed in large quantities, high levels of calcium will interfere with the utilization of phosphorus supplied by supplements and other feeds.

Always buy firm pellets with a limited amount of fine particles, advises Mr. Scheer. Avoid scorched or burnt pellets because overheating denatures protein, making it undigestible.

- 30 -

Contact:

Don Scheer
436-9150

March 18, 1985

For immediate release

Chicken outlook depends on demand

High stocks of chicken in storage are putting pressure on prices, and Alberta Agriculture's poultry analyst forecasts little change in the situation over the next two months.

David Hope says the chicken outlook is uncertain for the peak sales periods of May, June and July. On one hand, chicken is likely to improve its competitive position against ground beef and pork in late spring and summer; growth in chicken processing is also likely.

Clouding the outlook, however, is that consumers' disposable incomes aren't likely to increase significantly, and that stocks of chicken in storage are much higher than normal. The Canadian Chicken Marketing Agency increased its quota for 1985, and the Alberta market may be under pressure from excess production in other provinces.

1984, in contrast, was a dynamic year for the Canadian chicken industry, says Mr. Hope. The introduction of the "McNugget" in January set the stage for a year in which the disappearance of chicken in Canada increased by nearly nine per cent.

The year ended on a weak note, however. In Alberta, producer prices fell from a peak of $1.24 per kilogram in September to $1.18 per kilogram in December.

- 30 -

Contact:

David Hope
427-5382

March 18, 1985

For immediate release

Managing farm debt

The current economic climate indicates that agriculture faces an extended period of depressed prices, high costs and high interest rates.

If that outlook is correct, removing or reducing debt becomes a key to success, says Alfred Erichsen, who operates a 2,000-acre mixed farm at Botha. Speaking at the Alberta Agriculture conference Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit, Mr. Erichsen said that medium-term loans (those from one to seven years) create the greatest difficulty because they play havoc with farm cash flow.

A survival plan in an economic climate like this would mean taking no new medium-term loans, and paying down existing ones as rapidly as possible. Once medium-term loans are liquidated, the farm manager could consider buying capital assets on a "cash only" basis, said Mr. Erichsen. New medium-term loans shouldn't be taken until the economic climate indicates that expansion will be profitable.

Under the present circumstances, Mr. Erichsen suggested farmers shouldn't take operating loans that exceed 50 per cent of the inventory on hand.

"The accurate knowledge of where you and your farm are at any given time is crucial," Mr. Erichsen said. The tools of the trade are an up-to-date net worth statement, a profit and loss statement, and a cash flow statement.

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Contact:

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For immediate release

Earl Butz says U.S. farm policy must change

"American agricultural policy is in a mess," said Earl Butz, the former U.S. secretary of agriculture, at the Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit conference March 13 in Lake Louise.

At the same time that federal transfer payments to farmers are reaching near-record levels, the daily news is full of reports of farm failures, foreclosures, pressures on agribusiness and general rural distress, he said.

Mr. Butz blamed much of the problem on government involvement in pricing and marketing. Over the past 50 years the American government has introduced a variety of programs aimed at reducing agricultural production. These have been counter-productive, said Mr. Butz, because higher prices resulting from lower production merely give farmers an incentive to produce more.

Governments often make the error of basing long-term agricultural policy on the short-term situation, he said. For example, the Agricultural Act of 1981 set loan rates and target prices in the United States on the assumption that inflation would continue at the same rate. Since then inflation has slowed, but the existing legislation still creates escalation in target prices -- again, said Mr. Butz, a signal for farmers to produce more.

Discussing the world situation, Mr. Butz said he is alarmed at the trend toward economic nationalism and trade barriers. Food security, he said, means not only adequate supply but cost as well. "People who have to spend 80 per cent of their incomes on food don't have food security," he said . "We should produce food where it can be produced at lowest cost and then trade among nations."

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Earl Butz says U.S. farm policy must change (cont'd)

The answer to the difficulties facing agriculture must be found in other directions, Mr. Butz concluded. "Key words will be efficiency, lower unit costs, competitive pricing in export markets, favorable policies in non-agricultural sectors, and lower support prices."

- 30 -

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March 18, 1985

For immediate release

Swine ROP report released

The latest annual report for the Alberta Swine Record of Performance (ROP) program shows that in 1984 19,020 pigs were tested, a three per cent increase from the previous year.

Of this total, 18,168 pigs (6,164 boars and 12,004 gilts) were tested on 94 farms, and 852 boars were tested at the central test stations.

The program measures the hogs' backfat and growth rate (days from birth to 90 kilograms on the farm) or average daily gain (kilograms per day from 30 to 90 kilograms in the test station). The purpose of ROP, explains Art Lange of Alberta Agriculture's pork industry branch, is to identify animals which are superior in these traits, so they can be used as breeding stock.

The results for 1984 show slight increases both in backfat and the number of days to reach 90 kilograms for both boars and gilts on farms. Although this is the first time in 10 years of testing these figures have increased, Mr. Lange does not consider them reason for concern.

Boars tested on farms in 1984 showed an average backfat depth of 14.1 millimetres and 157 days to reach 90 kilograms; the figures for gilts on farms are 15.4 millimetres and 171 days.

Boars at test stations showed 14.5 millimetres backfat, .92 kilogram average daily gain, and 144 days to reach 90 kilograms. All test station results were improvements over the previous year.

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Swine ROP report released (cont'd)

Over the past 10 years that the swine ROP program has used ultrasonic equipment, backfat has been reduced by about 20 per cent, and the growth rate of animals in the program has improved by about 10 per cent.

Copies of the swine ROP report are available from the Pork Industry Branch, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

More information about last year's test results or the ROP program is available from Art Lange at 427-5319.

- 30 -

Contact:

Art Lange
427-5319

March 18, 1985

For immediate release

Analyst forecasts increase in world oilseed production

World oilseed production is expected to increase in the 1985-86 crop year, an American market analyst told farmers at Accent '85, Alberta Agriculture's outlook conference in Lethbridge March 6.

Parry Dixon of Archer-Daniels-Midland Co. said he expects present trends to continue into the new crop year, with soy oil prices remaining high, although slightly lower than this year. Intense competition among protein feeds has kept meal prices low, and this, too, will continue, limiting the crushing of oilseeds with a high meal content, particularly soybeans. The reduction in crushings will support oil prices.

The value of the American dollar and the level of Soviet meal imports are major unknowns for the next crop year. "A decision by the Soviets to return to the world meal markets could significantly change the outlook for 1985-86," said Mr. Dixon.

These predictions are based on normal weather conditions. "Any major weather problem in North America or Northern Europe could tighten the oilseed supply picture and firm prices significantly," he said.

- 30 -

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or

David Walker
Alberta Agriculture
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March 18, 1985

For immediate release

District home economist transfers to Evansburg

Chris Murphy, a district home economist with Alberta Agriculture, is transferring from Valleyview to Evansburg. Her appointment, which will be effective in mid-April, is announced by Shirley Myers, head of the home economics branch.

Ms. Murphy was raised in Red Deer, and in 1982 graduated from the University of Alberta with a B.Sc. in home economics majoring in foods and nutrition. She joined Alberta Agriculture as a district home economist-in-training at Barrhead, and in June 1983 was appointed to Valleyview.

- 30 -

Contact:

Chris Murphy
727-3673

March 18, 1985

For immediate release

District home economist appointed at Coronation

Shirley Myers, the head of Alberta Agriculture's home economics branch, has announced the appointment of Ruby Young as district home economist at Coronation.

Ms. Young will provide rural residents with services in all areas of home economics, emphasizing financial management, foods and nutrition and 4-H.

In 1980 Ms. Young graduated from the University of Alberta with a B.Sc. in home economics specializing in clothing and textiles. She worked as an instructor of interpersonal and daily living skills and later as a microwave product specialist before her appointment with Alberta Agriculture.

- 30 -

Contact:

Ruby Young
578-3970

March 18, 1985

For immediate release

Nutrition Month

The link between nutrition and fitness is the focus of national Nutrition Month, being sponsored in March in Alberta by the Alberta Registered Dietitians' Association.

LeRoy Fjordbotten, the minister of agriculture, says his department has a special interest in this event. Home economists in Alberta Agriculture are constantly trying to improve the health of children and adults by presenting eductional programs on the importance of proper eating.

"From an agriculture perspective, Alberta-produced foods play a vital part in a well-balanced diet," he said.

Aileen Whitmore, food and nutrition specialist with Alberta Agriculture, says that eating a wide variety of foods is the key to making sure you have a well-balanced diet. That means choosing foods from each of the four food groups -- meat and meat alternates, fruits and vegetables, breads and cereals, and milk. The tried-and-true advice still applies: eat in moderation and try to limit the amount of fat and refined sugar.

People of all ages are involved in fitness activities both to feel better and to lose weight. Exercising greatly reduces the stress of dieting, says Ms. Whitmore. The best exercises to burn off fat and improve your fitness level include cycling, skiing, long distance swimming, dancercise or aerobics. Even a good long walk will burn up energy, improve your fitness and may curb your appetite.

- 30 -

Contact:

Aileen Whitmore
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GOVERNMENT
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March 25, 1985

For immediate release

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March 25, 1985

For immediate release

Herbicide hustlers

There's nothing wonderful about the so-called "wonder herbicides" that are being promoted this spring by phone and door-to-door salespeople. Farmers, groundskeepers and other users of agricultural chemicals are the targets for these sales pitches.

Walter Yarish, the acting head of Alberta Agriculture's weed control section, urges people to buy herbicides only from reputable dealers.

The herbicides being sold by phone and door-to-door usually turn out to be registered chemicals that have been greatly diluted. While it appears buyers are getting great quantities of product they are in fact getting very little of the chemicals needed to control weeds.

For example, says Mr. Yarish, one chemical that is normally sold in an 80 per cent concentration has been diluted to only about one per cent and is being sold that way door-to-door.

As well, although the cost of the "wonder herbicides" appears low, it's in fact extremely high. "People who buy these herbicides could end up paying 10 to 20 times more per unit of active ingredient than they'd pay for herbicides from an established dealer," says Mr. Yarish. He advises anyone in doubt about the value of an agricultural chemical that's being promoted to check it out with a district agriculturist or agricultural fieldman.

- 30 -

Contact:

Walter Yarish
427-5329

For immediate release

Phosphorous requirements of beef cows

Proper nutrition for beef cows is important at any time, but after calving it becomes critical. This is particularly true for phosphorous, says Dale ZoBell, Alberta Agriculture's regional livestock specialist at Red Deer.

In most cases the grain portion of the livestock ration will provide enough phosphorous for the animals. After calving, however, the phosphorous requirements of beef cows rise greatly, especially in large cows capable of producing 20 pounds of milk daily. A cow like this weighing 1,300 pounds needs .04 pounds of phosphorous per day before calving and .105 pounds afterward, an increase of 2½ times. A 1,100 pound cow producing about 10 pounds of milk per day after calving requires .036 pounds of phosphorous per day before calving and .064 afterward.

For the 1,300 pound cow to meet her genetic potential her ration is likely to need supplementation with phosphorous unless she is grossly overfed, says Mr. ZoBell. Providing calcium and phosphorous mineral free-choice may not even be enough; it may be necessary to force-feed additional phosphorous in the grain portion of the ration. Mr. ZoBell urges producers to have their rations analysed, and check the mineral intake of their livestock to be sure the phosphorous requirements are being met.

Proper phosphorous levels are necessary for cows to cycle soon after calving, and open cows in the fall may be due to low phosphorous levels in the spring.

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Phosphorous requirements of beef cows (cont'd)

At the same time, says Mr. ZoBell, it's important that all nutrients (energy, protein, calcium, vitamins and trace minerals) are properly provided to make sure there are no limiting nutrients which may lead to nutritional deficiencies. A mineral supplementation program and adequate phosphorous levels in rations now should help to bring about fewer open cows and higher weaning weights in the fall.

- 30 -

Contact:

Dale ZoBell
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For immediate release

Special crop opportunities abound

What are special crops? Blair Roth, Alberta Agriculture's special crops specialist, says they are crops which aren't controlled by the Canadian Wheat Board, require some specialized management skills, or are grown on a limited acreage for a specific market.

Special crops allow farmers to diversify, reducing their dependence on one crop, and its associated diseases and insects or the prospect of downturns in the market.

Chickpeas are the latest pulse crop to be grown in Alberta, joining the already-established crops of dry beans, lentils, dry peas and faba beans. Chickpeas, sometimes called garbanzo beans, are used mainly in salad bars.

"If we in Alberta can produce chickpeas of an acceptable size, there's a good dollar return for farmers in the high heat unit areas of the province," says Mr. Roth. Chickpeas need a long growing season but have good tolerance to drought and frost. They would make a good crop in a dryland rotation but it appears irrigation may be needed to maintain the seed size. "The next couple years will tell whether we can successfully grow and market this crop," he says.

The acreage of other pulses is expanding rapidly in central Alberta, says Mr. Roth. Growers find that these cool season legumes respond to the weather and soil conditions of this area and there's a market, or some feeding value, to these crops. Legumes are highly beneficial in the crop rotation, and those that are also cash crops are that much more attractive.

Safflower is a long-season dryland crop that's making a comeback in Alberta, thanks in part to a new variety developed by Agriculture Canada in Lethbridge through Farming For the Future. Compared with commercial varieties, the variety is equal in yield and 10 days earlier. "It's exactly what we needed in Alberta," says Mr. Roth. In 1985, 500 acres

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Special crop opportunities abound (cont'd)

of the new variety will be grown to test both its viability and the market.

The new variety will fit nicely into the growing birdseed market. It is also lower in oil than commercial varieties now being grown in Montana, and will sell at a discount into the oil-crushing trade.

A deep-rooted annual, safflower helps to control high water tables to prevent the increase of dryland soil salinity. Safflower is being grown in recharge areas instead of alfalfa by dryland farmers who have no interest in a forage crop.

Confection and oil-type sunflowers are another growing industry in southern Alberta, with 4,000 acres expected to be grown this year. Most of the sunflowers are grown under irrigation but dryland farmers are drawn to the drought tolerance of this deep tap-rooted annual. Alberta Sunflower Seeds Ltd. processes most of the sunflowers grown in Alberta for "spits," nutmeats or birdseed. Oil-type sunflowers are usually sold for birdseed, but as Alberta's acreage grows, the seed could be shipped to Manitoba or offshore for crushing.

Wild rice is the most exciting of several other new special crops being grown in Alberta, says Mr. Roth. A growers' association was formed at Lac La Biche and 1,000 acres were planted in the fall of 1984. Wild rice brings a good price and if growers can supply a high yielding, quality product, there will be money in it for them, he says.

"In special crops, as in any business, there's always room for innovative people with imagination. Look around -- there are opportunities out there," says Mr. Roth.

- 30 -

Contact:

Blair Roth
329-5127

For immediate release

Developments in Alberta grain corn production

Grain corn has long been among Alberta's leading special crops. This year there are several exciting developments in this crop, says Blair Roth, the special crops specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Grain corn production is increasing east of Lethbridge and south of Brooks. A four-year dryland corn rotation project at Burdett shows average yields of 50 bushels per acre on summerfallow, 27 bushels per acre in two crops in a three-year rotation and 16 bushels per acre in continuous cropping.

Until now earlier, hybrid varieties and a large market in Alberta have made grain corn production economical for irrigated farmers. The major drawback for most growers has been the cost of the machinery needed to grow corn.

The results of the tests at Burdett indicate there is a place for grain corn on dryland, especially for farmers who already grow corn on irrigation, because they have the equipment.

More news in the grain corn business is the coming of age of dwarf corns, says Mr. Roth. A new dwarf corn variety from Cargill will be available in 1985. The advantage of this variety, it is hoped, is that it can be seeded and harvested with conventional equipment; the new variety will be solid seeded instead of row-cropped. "More than five million bushels of grain corn are used annually in Alberta, and we're close to another large corn user, B.C.'s Fraser Valley, so there's lots of room for growth in the corn industry," says Mr. Roth.

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Developments in Alberta grain corn production (cont'd)

In recent years silage corn has been grown as far north as Westlock, a far cry from the usual recommendation not to grow the crop north of Brooks. At present, the economics of growing silage corn under such low heat units is questionable, says Mr. Roth. If silage corn production continues in these cool areas it will be because of its benefits in a feeding program and not because of the yield.

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Contact:

Blair Roth
329-5127

March 25, 1985

For immediate release

Spring warble control for dairy cattle

Spring is the time to check dairy cattle for warbles and treat them if necessary, says Ali Khan, Alberta Agriculture's livestock pest control specialist.

Dairymen can check for warbles by feeling the animal's back for small bumps or cysts, which are made by warble larvae. Any animals found to have cysts should have one treatment every three weeks for nine weeks with a wash or spray containing rotenone. Rotenone is the only chemical that is approved for the treatment of cows that are being milked.

Spring monitoring over the past few years has shown a greater incidence of warble infestation in dairy cattle than in beef cattle. Dr. Khan says that is likely the result of dairymen not treating cows every year. (Dry cows can be treated for warbles in the fall but milking animals can be treated only in the spring and only with rotenone.) These untreated dairy herds serve as a reservoir every year for new warble infestations.

This spring agricultural fieldmen and warble control inspectors will visit dairy farmers who have a history of warble-infested herds to discuss control measures.

More information on controlling warbles in dairy herds is available from dairy specialists, district agriculturists or Dr. Ali Khan, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6, phone 427-9051.

- 30 -

Contact:

Ali Khan
427-9051

March 25, 1985

For immediate release

New film: A Matter of Soil

Erosion isn't the only major soil problem these days. Equally serious, in the opinion of many soil specialists, is the problem of declining soil fertility.

That problem -- and some solutions to it -- are the subject of *A Matter of Soil,* a new 22-minute film from Alberta Agriculture.

"Some current management practices such as summerfallowing and excessive tillage have brought about a decline in organic matter in some of our soils," says John Hermans, head of the soil and water conservation section of Alberta Agriculture.

The decline can be halted and organic matter levels improved by various soil management practices shown in the film. Continuous cropping is one such practice. The film also discusses the four main soil types found in the prairies and the varying amounts of organic matter in each.

A Matter of Soil is the third in a series of films dealing with soil conservation, and earlier this year was chosen Alberta's Best Educational Film for 1985. *A Matter of Soil* is available on loan, at no charge, from the Film Library, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

John Hermans
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March 25, 1985

For immediate release

New publication on farm business incorporation

Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch has released a new edition of the publication *Farm Business Incorporation.*

The publication discusses the new Alberta Business Corporation Act as it affects farm companies. It also outlines changes in tax regulations affecting farmers. At the time the publication went to print these changes had been proposed by the federal government; they have since been passed. The tax changes are:

- the special rollover of up to $120,000 of taxable capital gains into a registered retirement savings plan on the sale of farm property, including shares in a family farm corporation

- the expansion of the farm property rollover provision to include farm property leased by taxpayers to their own family farm corporations or to a family farm corporation of their spouse or child

- the expansion of the farm property rollovers in testamentary transfers of farm property, including shares of a family farm corporation, to allow for an elected value above the adjusted cost base of the property

- the elimination of the million dollar cumulative income limit on the earnings of small business corporations. Now the small business tax rate is available on up to $200,000 of active business income per year earned by any Canadian-controlled corporation.

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New publication on farm business incorporation (cont'd)

The publication also covers estate-planning strategies, taking into account the changes in tax legislation. It presents possible share structures for a farm company and sample clauses that could be used in an agreement setting up such a share structure.

Copies of *Farm Business Incorporation (Agdex 817-4)* are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices, the farm business management branch at Olds or the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

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Farm business management branch
556-4244

March 25, 1985

For immediate release

Fewer dealers, more electronics ahead for machinery

The tractor of the future will be loaded with electronic devices like automatic steering, and monitors to diagnose any breakdowns. When farmers want to buy a new tractor, however, they'll have a longer drive to the dealership. And they will be more likely to choose their equipment from a catalogue or a computer-produced image than by kicking tires.

That's part of the future of North American farm machinery as seen by Dave Mowitz, a senior editor with *Successful Farming* magazine and one of the speakers at the recent Alberta Agriculture conference Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit.

One trend in farming is from expansion to intensification, and farmers are expecting more from the machinery they buy, said Mr. Mowitz.

Advanced electronics is the key to improving efficiency, and herbicide application provides a classic example of how it can work. With existing sprayers 30 to 40 per cent of the herbicide can be lost to the atmosphere, but controllers and monitors on the sprayer could reduce the loss to 10 per cent. "You'll not only pay for the controller in the first year, but you might even make some money from it," said Mr. Mowitz.

The structure of the farm machinery industry will continue to change during the next five years as manufacturers cut back on plant capacity and adjust to lower sales levels. The future will also bring more mergers between manufacturers, and a continued reduction in the number of dealers. In Canada and the United States an average of 45 dealers has closed every month since 1981.

- (cont'd) -

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Fewer dealers, more electronics ahead for machinery (cont'd)

As well, said Mr. Mowitz, manufacturers will turn out fewer models and dealers will not carry so much inventory. "More tractors and combines will be bought sight unseen," he said. Several companies are already offering substantial price reductions to customers who order machinery from the factory.

"Things are beginning to look up for the industry," he said. "Several manufacturers reported profits last year for the first time in a long time, and sales are expected to increase by five per cent in 1985."

- 30 -

Contact:

James Obniawka
Farm business management branch
556-4276

March 25, 1985

For immediate release

Wanted: farm experience for students

At one time it was probably a good bet that most students taking agriculture at university came from farms and as a result had plenty of experience.

That's no longer the case. About half the students enrolled in agriculture at the University of Alberta do not have farm backgrounds. So this spring the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry is looking for farmers and agricultural businesses willing to hire these students and help them gain some of that much-needed experience.

What the students lack in experience they make up in willingness to learn, says Laraine Strafford of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry. Some of the students do have limited experience in agriculture, or special qualifications, like a certain type of driver's licence. The students are available for work from May 1 to September 1.

Anyone considering hiring a student can contact Mrs. Strafford with a description of the job and the general qualifications of person they'd like to hire. She will then post the job listing and interested students can contact the employer directly.

The university will also supply potential employers with information about federal and provincial programs that may pay a portion of the summer wages.

Mrs. Strafford may be reached at 432-4931.

- 30 -

Contact:

Laraine Strafford
Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry
University of Alberta
432-4931

March 25, 1985

For immediate release

New 4-H scholarship awarded

Marshall Stachniak, representing the Farm Credit Corporation (FCC), presents Corinne Kuzma of St. Paul with the first 4-H scholarship the FCC has awarded in Alberta.

An eight-year 4-H member from St. Paul has won a scholarship from the Farm Credit Corporation (FCC) in recognition of her participation in 4-H and community activities.

Corinne Kuzma took part in beef and light horse projects as a member of the St. Paul 4-H Multi-Club. She also served on the club executive, attended 4-H Club Week and won a trip to the national 4-H conference. She competed in public speaking at several levels and coached younger members of the club. Corinne's community involvement included figure skating, Ukrainian dance, school sports and students' union activities.

- (cont'd) -

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New 4-H scholarship awarded (cont'd)

Corinne is currently studying psychology at the University of Lethbridge.

The $200 FCC scholarship will be awarded annually to a 4-H member or former member from the northeast region.

- 30 -

Contact:

Elizabeth Webster
427-2541

March 25, 1985

For immediate release

Conference to examine ECA land use report

A conference will be held in Red Deer April 17 to discuss issues raised by the Environment Council (ECA) report entitled Maintaining and Expanding the Agricultural Land Base in Alberta.

The conference is being sponsored by the Alberta Chapter of the Soil Conservation Society of America (SCSA) and the Alberta Institute of Agrologists.

The conference will begin with a review of the background and content of the ECA report, followed by speakers who will discuss some of the issues raised by the report. The conference is intended for anyone concerned about land use and soil conservation. The registration fee is $20 per person in advance or $25 per person at the door.

The conference will be held at the Great West Inn in Red Deer. To register, contact the Alberta Institute of Agrologists at 428-5104.

- 30 -

Contact:

Gus Ribeiro
Soil Conservation Society
452-0090

March 25, 1985

For immediate release

Spring lawn care

Homeowners can do several things now to help bring about a healthy lawn in the coming season, says Lorraine Taylor of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre.

First, she says, sweep or rake off any snow mould, those fuzzy grey patches that sometimes appear on the lawn. Snow mould may be severe this spring because of last fall's early snowfall. If the damage is severe, the grass can be killed, and patches larger than 15 centimetres will have to be re-seeded or sodded.

Mrs. Taylor suggests breaking up any ice remaining from a backyard skating rink, or shovelling snowdrifts to encourage faster melting. Salt used on driveways or sidewalks during the winter can get into the lawn and damage the grass. In early spring any salty snow should be shovelled away, and grass that has been touched by salt should be rinsed well using a garden hose.

When the soil has dried thoroughly it's a good idea to rake the lawn to remove any dead branches, leaves and grass clippings. If a thatch layer of dead grass or clippings has built up more than two centimetres thick, the lawn will need a more vigorous raking, perhaps with a power rake.

As for fertilizing, Mrs. Taylor's advice is "Don't start too early." The lawn must repair any winter damage before it starts growing this season. Mid-May is soon enough for the first application of fertilizer, which can be 16-20-0, or for an established lawn of four or five years, a nitrogen-only fertilizer like 21-0-0 or 34-0-0.

- 30 -

Contact:

Lorraine Taylor
973-3351

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AGRI-NEWS

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CANADIANA

APR 1 E 1985

April 1, 1985

For immediate release

This Week

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April 1, 1985

For immediate release

Soil moisture conditions in Alberta

Sub-soil moisture in southern Alberta, although still low, is the best it's been in about 10 years. In the rest of the province, soil moisture is good and the outlook for 1985 is optimistic.

"With normal precipitation we can expect at least average yields," says Dena Lewis of Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch. Even if the summer brings more hot, dry weather, the impact should not be as great as in 1984 because of the improved soil moisture at this stage.

Southern Alberta has had no permanent snow cover this winter and precipitation has varied from 50 per cent to 75 per cent of normal. While subsoil moisture is better than in recent years, frequent chinooks have significantly dried the surface layers. As a result, wind erosion has been a serious problem this winter. A wet snowfall March 21 should recharge the surface moisture and, at least temporarily, reduce the hazard of wind erosion.

Ross McKenzie, Alberta Agriculture's soil fertility specialist in Lethbridge, anticipates a tendency back to the traditional crop-fallow rotation as a result of the 1984 drought. Mr. McKenzie suggests, however, that with the good sub-soil moisture and recent snow, farmers should consider recropping at least a portion of their land. If fields are summerfallowed, they will have little residue cover and therefore the threat of wind erosion may be even more severe from this summer until the spring of 1986. Ways of minimizing the risk of erosion include minimizing tillage operations, spraying to control weeds and seeding cover crops.

- (cont'd) -

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Soil moisture conditions in Alberta (cont'd)

Central Alberta had an average or above average snow pack. Fall soil moisture was medium to high, and the snow melt should reinforce this condition. If checks of individual fields verify these moisture conditions, recropping should be considered, says Ms. Lewis. To this point snow melt has been slow and steady, thus reducing the risk of flooding and water erosion.

Snow pack conditions in the Peace River block are average to slightly below average. In the Beaverlodge-Grande Prairie area snow melt is nearly complete and soil moisture has probably not changed significantly from Novermber 1. Here as well, recropping should be possible. Garry Coy, Alberta Agriculture's soil specialist in Fairview, reports that snow melt has been quick in that area, causing some flooding of flat areas and resulting in soil erosion and possible denitrification.

The map on the following page indicates the soil moisture conditions under stubble at the end of the 1984 season. Conditions on fallow will be slightly better.

- 30 -

Contact:

Richard Heywood
Conservation & development branch
Lethbridge
329-5338

or

Dena Lewis
422-4385

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AGRICULTURE

STUBBLE FALL SOIL MOISTURE NOVEMBER 1, 1984

Estimated as of fall, 1984
for a medium textured soil.

	HIGH	Subsoil moist to beyond 75 cm. (30 in.) No dry layers
	MEDIUM	Subsoil moist to about 45 to 75 cm. (18 to 30 in.).
	LOW	Subsoil moist to about 45 cm. (18 in.).

Compiled by Alberta Agriculture, Conservation and Development Branch.

Produced by the Alberta Bureau of Surveying and Mapping © 1985

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April 1, 1985

For immediate release

Bee imports from the United States

Alberta beekeepers can still import bees from the United States fror the 1985 shipping season.

However, measures have been taken by Agriculture Canada to ensure bees are free from the Honey Bee Tracheal Mite, the parasite which causes acarine disease in bees. The mite invades the respiratory system of honey bees and impairs their breathing.

Bee shipments must be accompanied by a certificate from the U.S. Department of Agriculture stating that the insects are free from the mite. Only imports from those states declared free from the disease and free areas within states with an eradication program in place will be allowed into the province.

Don MacDonald, Alberta Agriculture's Apiculturist at Falher says this partial ban won't have too much effect on Alberta beekeepers. However, he does suggest that it would make good management sense for beekeepers to winter bees in the event they're unable to import packaged bees in the future.

- 30 -

Contact:

Don MacDonald
837-2252

For immediate release

Calculating the profit of grazing yearling steers

Beef producers are advised to calculate the estimated profit in grass-fed steers by determining the break-even point before deciding the price they'll pay for grass-fed steers.

Many producers consider only the amount of grass available and become less price conscious the greener the grass becomes, says Dwight Karren, Alberta Agriculture's regional livestock specialist at Lethbridge. In fact, the price of the grass-fed steer is the largest single factor affecting profit.

The purchase price of the grass-fed steer represents 86 per cent of total costs while pasture costs account for 7.5 per cent, interest 5 per cent, and health-related costs 1.5 per cent.

Producers may find the Alberta Agriculture publication, *Feeder Cattle: What can you Pay?, Agdex 420/816-2,* useful in calculating profitability of grass yearling cattle. This publication is available from your local district agriculturist.

The publication shows how 650-pound yearling steers gaining 250 pounds over the grazing period, were calculated to have break-even points ranging from $66.20/cwt at a purchase price of $80.00/cwt to $80.08/cwt at a purchase price of $95.00/cwt.

If October's yearlings sell for $76.00/cwt, then steers bought at $80.00/cwt will return a profit of $87.48/steer. Those bought at $95.00/cwt would lose $36.72/steer.

The profitability of a grazing program can be increased by implanting steers and using insecticide-impregnated eartags. During a 94-day trial conducted on 420 yearling steers, gains increased by 9.1 per cent to 12.2 per cent by implanting the steers with Ralgro, Synovex-S or Compudose. The net result was 27 to 36 pounds of extra weight per steer.

- (cont'd) -

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Calculating the profit of grazing yearling steers (cont'd)

Re-implanting the steers after 100 days would be profitable if pasture quality were sufficient. Steer gains would be expected to be over one and a half pounds per day.

Insecticide-impregnated eartags will increase profitability of steers in areas where horn fly populations are high, such as in southern Alberta. In 1982-83 in trials conducted in central Alberta, eartags improved gains by 10 per cent and resulted in 25 pounds of extra weight in tagged yearlings.

- 30 -

Contact:

Dwight Karren
329-5106

April 1, 1985

For immediate release

Pest control publication for the home

Homeowners in Alberta will now have a new weapon to wield in their war against back yard pests.

Alberta Agriculture has recently released a 20-page tabloid that covers most of the pest-related problems faced by Alberta gardeners.

Back Yard Pest Management provides homeowners with basic information on control of insects, diseases, weeds and vertebrate pests around the home.

It offers practical, cost-effective solutions and it contains basic information that won't go out of date, says Mike Dolinski of Alberta Agriculture's plant industry division.

This handy, illustrated publication will help identify and solve pest problems using both chemical and non-chemical approaches. It talks about some common domestic pesticides and herbicides and explains how to use them properly.

Back Yard Pest Management, Agdex 605-2, is available from many garden supply centres, district agriculturists, agricultural fieldmen and the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

Mike Dolinski
427-5339

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Phone: (403) 427-2121

April 1, 1985

For immediate release

Reproduction management course at Olds

The science of bovine reproduction will be the topic of a four-day course offered at Olds College this spring.

Supported by the Alberta Dairymen's Association and Alberta Agriculture, two sessions of Reproduction Management will run from May 21 through May 24, 1985 and June 4 through June 7, 1985 at the college.

The course will use lectures, films, discussions, and laboratory work to cover these topics: introduction to reproduction, anatomy, endocrinology, estrus detection, embryo development and managing herd reproductive performance.

The course is designed for dairymen who are having trouble establishing and maintaining herd reproductive goals.

The cost for the four-day session is $65 tuition and $108 for room and board in the college residence (includes room and three meals daily).

For more information or to register, contact Continuing Education, Olds College, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1PO, telephone 556-8322 or 556-8385.

- 30 -

Contact:

Bill Knibbs
Continuing Education
Olds College
556-8322/556-8385

April 1, 1985

For immediate release

Course helps dairymen manage quota requirements

There are factors -- like the national economic situation and the weather -- that farmers are powerless to change. But Olds College is offering Alberta dairymen the tools to make the best of what they've got.

With the support of Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Dairymen's Association, the college will offer two five-day sessions in Managing Quota Requirements.

Running May 27 through May 31, 1985 and June 10 through June 14, 1985, the course includes lectures, problem-solving sessions, individual instruction, and group discussions.

For eight hours a day, participants will delve into such areas of quota management as the pricing of market share and fluid quotas, calculation of individual quota requirements, maintaining quota by herd manipulation (including the effect of calving intervals on production) and financial alternatives.

Participants will have the chance to examine the dairy facilities at the college and will be offered individual help in any problem area they designate.

The cost for the five-day session is $80 tuition and $136 for room and board at the college residence (includes room and three meals daily).

For more information or to register, contact Continuing Education, Olds College, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1PO, telephone 556-8322 or 556-8385.

- 30 -

Contact:

Bill Knibbs
Continuing Education
Olds College
556-8322 / 556-8385

For immediate release

Eligibility for the 1984 $10,000 RHOSP top-up

Revenue Canada has announced special considerations for people who have not met the technical requirements of the RHOSP $10,000 ''top-up.''

Alex Ostapiuk, from Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch says these will apply to anyone who topped-up and collapsed an RHOSP in 1984 when they bought an eligible residence.

Three items qualify you for special consideration:

1. If the RHOSP was not collapsed by the December 31, 1984 deadline but you had entered into an agreement by that date and had occupied the residence, you may still qualify for the top-up if the RHOSP was collapsed before March 2, 1985. RHOSP contributions made for the 1985 taxation year do not qualify.
2. If you did not occupy the house by March 1, 1985 because of unforeseen delays not brought about by yourself, then the RHOSP top-up provisions will apply. These provisions will only apply if the original agreement requires acquisition and occupancy of the premises no later than March 1, 1985.
3. If you occupied the premises by March 1, 1985 but could not obtain title in your name due to land registration requirements, the top-up would be allowed if the other requirements are met.

Another important consideration is that if you've bought a top-up eligible residence in 1984 and didn't have a RHOSP, you may still claim the $10,000 top-up for the filing of your 1984 income tax return.

- (cont'd) -

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Eligibility for the 1984 $10,000 RHOSP top-up (cont'd)

If you are eligible for this top-up and have already filed your 1984 income tax return without claiming it, Revenue Canada will let you amend your return. This amendment can be done by writing a letter to your regional office explaining the details of your case and enclosing a completed T579 top-up deduction election form. If any of these circumstances apply to you, be sure to keep all documents to support your case.

- 30 -

Contact:

Alex Ostapiuk
556-4235

Revenue Canada Information
Edmonton - 420-3510
Toll free: 1-800-232-1966

Revenue Canada Information
Calgary - 231-4101
Toll free: 1-800-332-1410

April 1, 1985

For immediate release

New publication on crop and hail insurance

With last year's bad weather still fresh in their minds, many farmers are no doubt thinking about buying crop insurance.

While insurance is one way of reducing the risk of crop loss, farmers must deal with some important questions. To what extent will crop insurance reduce their risk? What level of insurance best suits the needs of an individual farmer? Does the possible benefit of the insurance warrant the premium being charged?

Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch has released a publication that may help farmers answer those questions. Its title is *Crop Insurance--What is it? Should I buy it?* The publication describes the insurance programs offered by the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation and discusses the cost-benefit relationship farmers must keep in mind when deciding on crop insurance.

Copies of *Crop Insurance--What is it? Should I buy it? (Agdex 838-6)* are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices, the farm business management branch at Olds or the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

Harry Warne
Farm business management branch
556-4244

April 1, 1985

For immediate release

Agriculture hall of fame nominations

Nominations are now being accepted for the Alberta Agriculture Hall of Fame, which recognizes Albertans who have made an outstanding contribution to agriculture and the rural community.

The deadline for the receipt of nominations is June 30, 1985. All nominations will be turned over to a selection committee of farm men and women from throughout the province.

Any Albertan who displays devoted service to the development of agriculture at the local, provincial, national or international level may be eligible for entrance. Preference will be given to agricultural producers, but agricultural business people, professional agrologists and rural community workers will also be considered. Nominees may have served the farming community as professionals or volunteers, but must be Canadian citizens.

Individuals chosen for induction into the hall of fame will be honored at a banquet and ceremony in March 1986. This event traditionally coincides with Agriculture Week. Portraits and histories of the inductees for 1985 will be added to the Agriculture Hall of Fame display on the main floor of Alberta Agriculture's J.G. O'Donoghue Building in Edmonton.

The Hall of Fame, which was established in 1951, now has 65 members. LeRoy Fjordbotten, Alberta's minister of agriculture, says that being inducted into the hall of fame

- (cont'd) -

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Agriculture hall of fame nominations (cont'd)

is the greatest honor Alberta Agriculture can bestow upon an individual.

Nomination forms for the Agriculture Hall of Fame are available through Alberta Agriculture's district offices or by writing to: Alberta Agriculture Hall of Fame, J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

Gabe Boulet
427-2403

For immediate release

4-H'ers set for capital trip

Six senior 4-H members from Alberta will fly to Ottawa April 19 to attend the 1985 National 4-H Citizenship Seminar.

The teenage delegates, chosen at Provincial 4-H Selections last May, are Rhonda Golby and Cheryl Fluet of Cherhill, Greg Ness of Bashaw, Tracy Phaunmuller of Mayerthorpe, Sheila Zimmerman of Winfield and Carmen Marshall of Balzac.

Sandy Behnke, the provincial 4-H home economics specialist, will chaperone the group.

The Albertans will be among 60 4-H delegates who through the seminar will have the opportunity to learn more about their rights and responsibilities as Canadian citizens, their heritage and culture, government, citizenship and important Canadian issues. They will visit Parliament Hill, the Governor-General's residence and citizenship court. Delegates will also meet their members of parliament and attend Question Period in the House of Commons.

The Alberta delegates will be honored at a banquet sponsored by the Alberta Wheat Pool before their departure.

- 30 -

Contact:

Sean Cochlan
Provincial 4-H camping & exchange specialist
Airdrie
948-5101

April 1, 1985

For immediate release

Provincial 4-H public speaking finals

4-H club members from across Alberta will compete in the Provincial Public Speaking Finals on Saturday, April 13.

Fourteen 4-H members who have successfully competed in their own regions will be meeting to further challenge their speaking abilities, and each other, on the topic of "Youth in Canada." The event will take place at the Edmonton Northlands Agricom, Salons One and Two, on April 13 at 2:30 p.m. The public is encouraged to attend.

The public speaking finals are sponsored by Edmonton Northlands and Alberta Agriculture, and are aimed at developing the communication skills and leadership qualities of Alberta's young people.

- 30 -

Contact:

Elizabeth Webster
Personal development specialist
4-H branch
427-2541

April 1, 1985

For immediate release

Irrigation management specialist appointed

Bob Riewe is Alberta Agriculture's new irrigation management specialist in Lethbridge. His appointment is announced by A.E. Pungor, head of the irrigation branch.

Mr. Riewe will be responsible for implementing the Alberta irrigation management advisory services program. He will also provide direction, liaison, consultation and advice to irrigation branch staff with respect to resource use as it affects crop growth, production, technique and methodologies.

Mr. Riewe was raised in southern Alberta, and attended the University of Alberta, graduating in 1979 with a B.Sc. in agriculture, majoring in soil science. Since 1980 he has worked as an irrigation specialist with the irrigation branch in Calgary and Strathmore.

- 30 -

Contact:

Bob Riewe
329-5140

COMING AGRICULTURAL EVENTS

1985

Alberta Association of MDs and Counties
Capri Centre
Red Deer, Alberta.....April 2 - 3

Alberta Agricultural Economics Association
Annual Conference
Red Deer Lodge
Red Deer, Alberta.....April 11 - 12

Provincial 4-H Public Speaking Finals
Northlands Agricom Building
Edmonton, Alberta.....April 13

AI and Dairy Herd Management Course
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....April 15 - 26

AAEA (Alberta Agricultural Economics Association)
Annual Conference
Great West Inn
Red Deer, Alberta.....April 16 - 17
D. Tona - 421-3755

Agricultural Institute of Canada Klinck Lectures
Edmonton.....April 17
Sven Ericsons, Mayor Magrath Drive
Lethbridge, Alberta.....April 18

Soil at Risk (Soil Conservation Conference)
Royal Canadian Legion Hall
Hanna, Alberta.....April 23 - 24
Russel Harvey - 854-4451 or John Timmermans 948-5101

Canadian Forestry Service: Open House
Northern Forestry Research Centre
Edmonton, Alberta.....May 2 - 5

Agriculture Workshop for Lenders
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....June 2 - 7
Doug Barlund - 556-4245

Alberta Institute of Agrologists Annual Meeting
Fairview, Alberta.....June 7 - 8
Bob Noble - 835-4975

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Coming Agricultural Events (cont'd)

15th Annual Alberta Plowing Championships
Wanham, Alberta.....June 20 - 22
Mrs. Elaine Dick - 694-2261

AIC National Conference
Charlottetown, P.E.I.....June 23 - 27
AIC '85, Box 1623, Charlettetown, P.E.I.

Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Short Course
University of Saskatchewan Campus, Saskatoon.....June 26 - 28
Bruce Hobin - (306)966-5551

National Conference (38th), Canadian Water Resources Assn.
Lethbridge Lodge
Lethbridge, Alberta..... June 26 - 28
J.G. Calpas - 329-5145 or Jay C. Purnell - 329-5516

Canadian Seed Growers' Assoc. Annual Meeting
Victoria, B.C.....July 4 - 6

Western Agricultural Economics Association Annual Meeting
(International Meeting--U.S. and Canada)
University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.....July 7 - 9
Dr. H. Furtan, Saskatoon

International Soil Tillage Research Organization Conference
Guelph, Ontario.....July 8 - 12
Dr. T.B. Daynard, Guelph, Ontario N1G 2W1

Snow Management for Agriculture
International/Symposium
Swift Current, Saskatchewan.....July 9 - 1
Dr. Zentnor, Research Centre, Swift Current

Annual Agricultural Service Board Field Tour
High Prairie/Fahler/Valleyview.....July 10 - 12
Ferrin Leavitt - 427-2171

American Civil Engineering Association
Irrigation & Drainage Conference
San Antonio, Texas.....July 18 22
Akos Pungor - 329-5140

5th World Angus Forum
Edmonton Northlands, Box 1480
Edmonton, Alberta.....July 18 - 27
Mr. Leroy Emerson - 471-7210

Coming Agricultural Events (cont'd)

Edmonton's Klondike Days Exposition
Edmonton Northlands, Box 1480, Edmonton.....July 18 - 27
Mr. Leroy Emerson - 471-7210

Alberta Women's Week
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....July 22 - 25
Ellen Fromback - 384-3737

Western Canadian Sheep & Wool Show and Sale
Vanscoy, Saskatchewan.....August 2 - 3
Jim Koal - 664-5200

Soil Conservation Society of America
(40th Annual Conference)
Marriot's Pavilion Hotel
St. Louis, Missouri.....August 4 - 7
A.D. Latornell, 10670 Younge St., Richmond Hill, Ontario.

First Annual Canadian Pacific Symposium:
Applications of Biotechnology to Western Canadian Agriculture
and Forestry
University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta.....September 26 - 27
Dr. J. Hoddinott - 432-3290

Irrigation & Soil Management (International Course)
Volcani Centre of Agric. Research Organization
Tel Aviv, Israel.....Oct. 13 - Dec. 13
Dr. Kurt M. Schallinger, P.O. Box 6, Bet Dagan
50-200, Israel

Northlands Farmfair
Edmonton Northlands, Box 1480, Edmonton.....November 7 - 16
Mr. Leroy Emerson - 471-7210

Canadian Honey Council
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.....November 20 - 22
John Gruszka - 922-9790

Canadian Western Agribition and Mexabition
Exhibition Grounds
Regina, Saskatchewan.....November 22 - 29
Dianna Hebert - (306) 565-0565

Christian Farmers' Federation of Alberta Annual Meeting
Leduc, Alberta..... November 29
Ted Koopmans - 428-6981

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Coming Agricultural Events (cont'd)

1986

Canadian Charolais Association Annual Meeting & Convention
Saskatoon Inn, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.....February 6 - 8
Ed Pelletier - (306) 467-2286

World Sheep Congress
Stampede Park
Calgary, Alberta.....July 5 - 16

World Charolais Federation Annual Meeting
Marlborough Inn, Calgary, Alberta.....July 9 - 12
Joyce Stewart - (403) 276-9242

AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA
APR 24 1985

April 8, 1985

For immediate release

This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

April 8, 1985

For immediate release

Farm Fertilizer Price Protection Plan announced

On April 1, Alberta's minister of agriculture, LeRoy Fjordbotten announced a new incentive to help Alberta crop producers ease input costs.

"Considering fertilizer can represent as much as 30 per cent of the cash input cost of crop production," said Mr. Fjordbotten, "this is an appropriate area in which we can help farmers reduce production costs."

The Alberta Farm Fertilizer Price Protection Plan has been established to reduce the farmer's cost for most types of fertilizer used in Alberta. Since fertilizer prices and types used vary considerably across the province, payments under this plan will be made directly to farmers. Payments will be based on $50 per tonne of actual nitrogen and $25 per tonne of actual phosphate used in fertilizer formulations purchased by farmers.

The two-year Farm Fertilizer Price Protection Plan will be retroactive to August 1, 1984 and will end July 31, 1986. Fertilizer purchased between those two dates will be eligible for grant payments. The total estimated cost of the program is $47 million.

Application forms should be available from Alberta Agriculture district and regional offices within two weeks. It's expected the first grant cheques will be processed shortly after the first applications are received.

Alberta farmers purchase approximately $300 million worth of fertilizer each year, with natural gas being the major energy component. The payments to farmers under this program will exceed the royalties received by the Province on natural gas used in fertilizer products.

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Farm Fertilizer Price Protection Plan announced (cont'd)

Here is a representative listing of the reduction per tonne of various fertilizer grades.

Fertilizer Grade	Reduction (per tonne)
Anhydrous Ammonia (82-0-0)	$41.00
Urea (46-0-0)	$23.00
Ammonium Nitrate (34-0-0)	$17.00
Ammonium Sulphate (21-0-0)	$10.50
Ammonium Phosphate (11-55-0)	$19.25
Ammonium Phosphate (23-23-0)	$17.25

Blends and other grades will be paid at the rate of $50 per tonne of actual nitrogen and $25 per tonne of actual phosphate contained in the formulation.

To qualify, fertilizer does not necessarily have to be bought in Alberta.

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Contact:

Adolph Goettel
427-2530

For immediate release

Winterkill in Alfalfa

Alberta's $28 million alfalfa dehydration industry is located mainly in the north and north-central regions of the province -- the same regions where winterkill is predicted this year.

The reason for the problem is cold December weather, followed by a thaw, then a severe drop in temperatures in January. Ice formed on the soil surface and snow provided little or no protection to the plants.

Alfalfa samples dug at the Agriculture Canada research station at Beaverlodge have shown considerable winterkill. Plants taken in a number of fields in the Falher area have confirmed these results. So far it's estimated 4500 acres in the Falher area will be severely damaged.

Dr. Jim McKenzie, research scientist at the Beaverlodge research station suggests that growers take samples from two or three locations within a field, pot them and let them grow indoors. Some growth should occur within a week to 10 days if plants are not damaged.

"Some varieties will show more winterkill than others and stands seeded last year will be less affected," he says.

By digging samples now to determine the extent of winterkill, producers can start taking steps to minimize the effect of losses. Growers can consider the options of re-seeding and contracting alfalfa in other areas.

Alfalfa, Alberta's single most important forage crop contributes about $150 million each year to the economy.

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Contact:

Dr. Jim McKenzie
354-2212

April 8, 1985

For immediate release

Flax Council established

Alberta's oilseed industry will be interested in a new organization which was established on March 4th. The Flax Council, fostered by the Flax Growers of Western Canada, is intended to benefit and assist the flax industry based mainly in the western provinces, says Al Martin, executive director of the Council.

The Flax Council will explore potential markets and promote flax products throughout the world. It aims to improve the production and use of flax through education, research and promotional programs. Information on producing, handling, marketing, processing and utilizing flax and its products will be collected and disseminated by the Council.

"The Council will help generate additional research which up until now was non-existent," says Phil Thomas, Alberta Agriculture's oilseed specialist at Lacombe.

Special membership in the Flax Council is open to all institutions, organizations, companies and industrial firms interested in flax and its use. General membership is reserved for producers who wish to support the council in its efforts to increase markets for flax and its products. For details on membership please contact Al Martin, Executive Director, 305 - 433 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 1B3.

- 30 -

Contact:

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or

Phil Thomas
782-4641

April 8, 1985

For immediate release

Arizona likes A Taste of Canada

Alberta's agriculture minister LeRoy Fjordbotten, centre, holds a newspaper flyer featuring Alberta food products in Phoenix supermarkets. With Mr. Fjordbotten are Jerry Bradley, left, of Canada West Trading and David Taylor, Canada's acting consul-general in Los Angeles.

Two million dollars' worth of Alberta food products were sold in a two-week promotion held in 80 Safeway stores in Phoenix, Arizona and the surrounding area.

Among the Alberta products featured were pork, corned beef, crumpets, pizza, flavored water, perogies, cookies, potatoes and cheese.

The promotion, which ended in late March, took place using the theme A Taste of Canada. The event was noteworthy in several ways: it was the first time Alberta products

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Arizona likes A Taste of Canada (cont'd)

have been sold in the Phoenix area, and involved the largest volume of Alberta products sold through an American retailer in such a short time.

Jerry Bradley, the marketing manager of Canada West Trading Limited, the Edmonton export firm that arranged the shipment of product to Phoenix, says the crumpets, bacon and Nanton water proved extremely popular. Some stores ran out of product before the promotion ended.

"It appears this promotion helped to create a demand," Mr. Bradley said, noting that in-store demonstrations and newspaper advertising helped to make consumers more aware of what was available. As well, he said, some of the products were familiar to the many Canadians holidaying or living in Phoenix.

After visiting several of the stores featuring Alberta products, the minister of agriculture, LeRoy Fjordbotten, said the promotion was an important first step toward getting Alberta products into the market on a regular basis. "Alberta is looking for ways of evening up the trade imbalance that exists between Alberta and Arizona -- we import five times the amount of food products that we send to this market," he said.

Mr. Fjordbotten added that he hoped the success of the Phoenix event would lead to similar efforts in San Francisco, Los Angeles and the Pacific northwest.

Mr. Fjordbotten commended Canada West Trading, saying this kind of promotion fits nicely with a top priority of the government of Alberta -- namely, free trade with the United States. "If our producers are going to get adequate returns in the future, export marketing is going to play a key role," said the minister.

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Arizona like A Taste of Canada (cont'd)

To sell in any new market, product packaging is of prime importance, and for the Phoenix promotion some Alberta processors had to develop special labelling. In general, packaging is one area Mr. Fjordbotten feels could be improved. "It's adequate now, but we need more work," he commented.

Robert Taylor, the vice-president of Safeway's Phoenix division, is enthusiastic about the consumer response to the campaign. "Store managers reported that all products moved well. We already carry some Canadian products, and I'm sure that as a result of this event a few more are going to find their way onto our shelves."

- 30 -

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For immediate release

Tips on buying high-quality forage seed

The Canada Seeds Act and regulations are intended to protect the seed consumer by defining quality and purity standards for seed. According to these regulations, Agriculture Canada grades and identifies the specific quality and purity of seed.

The purchase of certified seed assures the buyer that the seed meets the quality and purity standards of certified seed including trueness to variety. Each lot of seed which grades certified is identified with a blue tag. In situations where common seed is used, (i.e. variety not identified), the use of Canada No. 1 seed assures the buyer that per cent germination and purity, (i.e. freedom from weeds and other crop seeds) are high.

Additional information can be obtained from the certificates of seed analysis issued for each lot of seed. The use of seed analysis certificates is strongly recommended. They can be made available at the time of seed purchase and can help in selecting the lot of seed for a specific field. Here's the information available from the certificate of seed analysis:

1. The information that is included on the seed tag (i.e. from the seed bag) is also on the certificate. The seed certificate and lot numbers should be checked to confirm they are for the same seed.
2. Amount, type and quantity of weed seeds per 25 grams (approximately one ounce) by name and class of weeds.
3. Amount and quantity of other crop types per 25 grams (approximately one ounce) by name.
4. Per cent pure seed.
5. Per cent germination.

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Tips on buying high-quality forage seed (cont'd)

To be official, the seed testing certificate must be signed and stamped by an analyst or inspector.

Myron Bjorge, Alberta Agriculture's forage crop specialist at Lacombe, suggests the following procedure for buying high quality seed:

Phone a reputable seed company a week or two before purchasing seed. Discuss the crops and varieties of seed you're interested in and indicate that you wish to see the crop certificates. Then, when you visit the seed firm to make the purchase, the staff will be prepared to offer a suitable lot of seed.

Have a reasonable expectation of what represents adequate quality, says Mr. Bjorge. Seed that's weed free may not be available. However, it's reasonable to expect seed with a low weed seed content with no weed seed not already present on the field to be planted.

The publication *Varieties of Perennial Hay and Pasture Crops for Alberta 1985, Agdex FS 120/32* contains information on selecting forage crops and varieties suitable in your district. It's available from your district agriculturist and the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

Myron Bjorge
782-4641

For immediate release

Forage seed situation and outlook

Forage seed market activity is not likely to change much from its present quiet state, reports Alberta Agriculture's special commodities analyst Fred Boyce.

Few new sales have been reported over the last few months and most shipments are from previous sales commitments. Most forage seed crop prices have been holding steady with both producers and seed companies waiting for indication of seed requirements by retail outlets.

Short supplies of crested wheat grass, brome grass and rye grasses have kept prices strong. Alternately, ample supplies and weak demand for timothy have sharply eroded timothy seed prices, which are likely to persist through 1985. Grower prices are generally quoted at 33 per cents per kilogram.

Turf grass prices have strengthened in the United States, helped by a fairly buoyant housing market and slightly lower blue grass supplies. Large Canadian and Danish fescue crops will limit further increases in U.S. turf grass prices and little change is expected in grass seed prices during the next few months.

Prices for forage legume crops have been relatively stable, says Mr. Boyce. Alfalfa seed prices are virtually unchanged from a year ago and should hold. Increased area and better yields boosted production this past year. Export sales of alfalfa, mainly to the U.S., reached nearly 800,000 kilograms in the 1983-84 crop year.

Clover seed prices are down slightly from a year ago, despite small clover crops. Reduced export shipments of clover seed have kept prices on the defensive and developments in the next few months will dictate future price trends.

- 30 -

Contact:

Fred Boyce
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April 8, 1985

For immediate release

Graduates with specialized, practical training available

It's almost time for over 17,000 Alberta college and university students to take their places at the starting line of the proverbial race for employment.

Many of these students, however, will find themselves graduating into a job market where "overqualified and underexperienced" are the words standing between them and employment.

As the need for trained specialists grows in every industry -- including agriculture -- employers are seeking graduates with practical experience and technical expertise.

There are, however, some educational institutions that still believe in the motto of "learning by doing." More and more students are turning to colleges that offer hands-on training in specialized fields.

Colleges are responding. "We are encouraging students to set career goals early in their education," says Yvonne Kennedy, placement officer at Olds College in Olds, Alberta.

The college, which caters to 900 students interested in agriculture, technology and business, believes firmly in providing students with practical training for a diversified work force.

"These students are not just sitting in a classroom," says Mrs. Kennedy. "They're trying out their skills and refining them through work experience programs, practicums and by carrying out their responsibilities on the college's farmstead."

In keeping with expanding industry, the college's curriculum has grown to include diploma programs for land agents, animal health technologists, agricultural engineering technologists, landscape gardeners and more.

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Graduates with specialized, practical training available (cont'd)

Because the students have practical experience by the time they graduate, "the college has a reputation of supplying energetic, willing, and dependable graduates," she added.

For free posting of job prospects and the arrangement of on-campus interviews, employers can call the student placement officer at (403) 556-8232.

- 30 -

Contact:

Yvonne Kennedy
Olds College
556-8232

For immediate release

Shorter calving season

Increased productivity and competitivness are the benefits of shortening the traditional 90-day breeding season to 63 days or three breeding cycles, says Rob Hand, Alberta Agriculture's regional livestock specialist at Barrhead.

Typically, about 85 per cent of the herd give birth in the first 63 days of the calving season, leaving 15 per cent of the herd calving late. When comparing fall weaning weights of early and late born calves, the late born will average over 100 pounds lighter. Since late born calves represent 15 per cent of the herd, spreading this 100 pounds over all calves reduces weaning weights by about 15 pounds per head.

For herds where 20 per cent of the cows calve late, weaning weights of early and late born calves could differ by 125 pounds. Spread over all calves, this represents a reduction of 25 pounds per head at weaning time.

Reductions of 15 to 25 pounds per head may sound small, but benefit in several ways: an increase in saleable weight of three to five per cent, a reduction in break-even sale price of 2.5 to 5 cents per pound, a more uniform calf crop with potential for price premiums, the equivalent to marketing charges at sale time and less labor at calving time.

A shortened calving interval is possible; some producers are now calving all cows in under 52 days or 2½ breeding cycles. Feeding is the most important factor in achieving a shorter breeding season.

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Shorter calving Season (cont'd)

Feeding for fertility can be accomplished by:

- maintaining cows throughout the winter at a condition score of 2.0 to 2.5 (5.0 being fat)
- reducing feed competition for young and thin cows by separating from the main herd or by increasing the feeding space
- saving the best forages for after calving
- supplementing barley or oats in after-calving rations if forages are not of top quality
- depending on milk ability, feed from 0.15 to 0.20 lb daily range mineral after calving

- 30 -

Contact:

Rob Hand
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April 8, 1985

For immediate release

Three Alberta companies receive federal-provincial assistance

Federal Industry minister, Sinclair Stevens and LeRoy Fjordbotten, Alberta's minister of agriculture announced that three Alberta companies will receive federal-provincial assistance.

A Bassano meat processor, Ed's Meat Market, will receive $6,045 in assistance to expand its facility and purchase new freezers and coolers. Ed Chapman, owner of the firm, said the 3,800-square-foot facility is expected to cost just over $30,000. The operation is one of two outlets to provide meat processing services to the Bassano area.

Living Foods, a division of Sinnamon Brothers Holdings Ltd., will receive federal-provincial assistance of $79,472 to establish a new alfalfa sprout processing facility in Camrose. Owners Eldon Sinnamon and Ken Gillett estimate the new facility to cost just over $264,000 and expect to employ eight people.

Wanham Dehye Ltd., a local alfalfa pelleting plant, will receive $66,203 in federal-provincial assistance to undertake minor renovations and to purchase new equipment for the existing pelleting facility. James Sather, company president, expects plant production to increase from 12,000 to 14,000 tonnes of pellets in the next season of operation. Total cost of the project is estimated at $225,000.

The assistance is being made available under the Nutritive Processing Assistance Agreement which is jointly administered and equally funded by the federal Department of Regional Industrial Expansion (DRIE) and Alberta Agriculture. Applications can be submitted until September 30, 1985.

- 30 -

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For immediate release

Fertigation experiment results

Fertigation, or the application of fertilizer through an irrigation system, was the basis for experiments conducted by Alberta Agriculture irrigation and conservation staff at Brooks from 1981 to 1983. The experiments showed that there is little difference in recovery of nitrogen between fertigation and the conventional broadcast method.

On coarser soils, fertigation reduced the loss of nitrogen fertilizer due to leaching, increased the recovery of nitrogen by the crop, and increased grain yield by about four per cent. The amount of nitrogen fertilizer lost by injection in the pivot irrigation system was proportional to the amount of water lost by evaporation.

The conventional method of applying nitrogen fertilizer to annual crops is to broadcast all of the nitrogen requirement in the spring. Nitrogen is quite soluable and nitrogen losses by leaching may be high on coarse textured soil. Two or three fertigation applications can reduce losses from leaching and ensure that the fertilizer is available when crops need it most.

During the experiment period, Neepawa wheat was grown under a high pressure pivot in 1981 and a low pressure pivot in 1982. Grain corn was grown under a low pressure pivot in 1983. The soil textures were loam to clay loam in 1981 and sandy loam in 1982 and 1983. For the fertigation treatments 28-0-0 (ammonium nitrate plus urea, plus water) was applied through the pivot system two or three times over the season. For the broadcast treatment 34-0-0 (ammonium nitrate) was applied once in May.

The 1981 fertigated Neepawa wheat yielded 3.4 bu/ac (231 kg/ha) more grain than the broadcast treatments, and in 1982 it yielded 1.5 bu/ac (104 kg/ha) more. In 1983,

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Fertigation experiment results (cont'd)

the fertigated grain corn yielded 5.7 bu/ac (350 kg/ha) more grain than the broadcast treatments. These increases represent three to five per cent more crop from fertigated areas than the conventionally fertilized area.

There was no difference in the protein content of grain harvested from the broadcast or fertigation treated areas. The average recovery of injected nitrogen fertilizer for the low pressure pivot was 94.3 per cent compared to 91.3 per cent for the high pressure pivot. A greater loss of nitrogen by volatilization would be expected with a high pressure pivot.

The pivot water application efficiencies were an average of 94.0 per cent for the low pressure pivots and 90.6 per cent for the high pressure pivot. The water distribution was variable along each pivot and resulted in an uneven coverage of water and injected fertilizer over the field.

Experiments carried out on sandy loam soil showed an average of seven per cent higher recovery of nitrogen by the crop and soil (0-90 cm root zone) by the fertigation treatments over the broadcast treatments. The experiment on the loam to clay loam soil showed only one per cent difference in nitrogen recovery between fertigation and broadcast treatments.

The extra cost and greater convenience of fertigation should be taken into account when it's considered as an alternative to conventional methods of fertilizer application, says Colin McKenzie of the Alberta Horticulture Research Center at Brooks. Liquid nitrogen fertilizer costs more than conventional fertilizer and requires an injection system and storage tank. However, fertigation is convenient because it allows for optimum timing of application and requires little additional labor.

- 30 -

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April 8, 1985

For immediate release

Establishing productive alfalfa stands

Alfalfa is the most widely adapted and generally the most productive legume grown in Alberta, says Myron Bjorge, Alberta Agriculture's forage crop specialist at Lacombe. However, several things should be considered when planting this crop for vigorous and productive stands.

Alfalfa requires soil that's well-drained both on the surface and internally. It should not be too acidic or too alkaline (pH range of 6.0 - 8.5). Alfalfa will tolerate a medium salinity level.

Alfalfa seed should be planted one-quarter to one-half inch into a firmly-packed seedbed. Companion crops are not recommended, especially in the Brown Soil zones. In the Black and Grey Wooded Soil zones companion crops are often used and should be cross-seeded at approximately one-half the usual seeding rate with a maximum of 30 to 40 pounds per acre of total available nitrogen to reduce the competitive effect on the alfalfa seedlings.

Early harvesting of the companion crop is preferred. Early seeded alfalfa with no companion crop will produce a cutting of hay by this fall if moisture conditions are favorable. Mr. Bjorge suggests growers consider this alternative since it provides an opportunity for a hay crop this year while providing conditions for a vigorous stand of alfalfa.

"Stick on inoculant before planting to ensure vigorous stands," says Mr. Bjorge. "It's also important to use sufficient seed," he adds. Pure stands should be considered where

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Establishing productive alfalfa stands (cont'd)

alfalfa is known to do well. Where grasses are included they should be considered at reduced seeding rates and it should be remembered that creeping rooted grasses are aggressive and tend to dominate the stand. Less competitive grasses such as crested wheatgrass, meadow bromegrass, timothy or orchardgrass are preferred.

Alfalfa vigor can be maintained by avoiding use in critical periods. Alfalfa should not be harvested in August in northern and central Alberta or in southern Alberta in September if a three-cut harvest system is used. The application of phosphate fertilizer is especially important and the use of soil tests will determine the amounts of phosphorus to use and identify other plant nutrients which may be deficient.

If long-lived stands are desired, then winter hardy varieties should be planted. If high yield is the primary objective, the use of Flemish varieties and shorter rotations (e.g. three years) will increase yield per acre.

Information on specific varieties recommended for your district is available in *Varieties of Perennial Hay and Pasture Crops for Alberta 1985, Agdex FS 120/32.* This publication is now available from district agriculturists and the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

Myron Bjorge
782-4641

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April 8, 1985

For immediate release

New updated custom rates publications

Three updated custom rates publications have been released by Alberta Agriculture. These are the *Directory of Custom Operators in Alberta - 1985*, the *Custom Rates Annual Survey Summary - 1984* and *Farm Machinery Costs as a Guide to Custom Rates - Spring 1985.*

The *Directory of Custom Operators in Alberta - 1985* was designed to answer the question "Who does custom work in my area?" It lists the custom operator's name, town, telephone number and type of custom service offered under the following categories: cultivation, applications, haying, silage, grain, livestock, land clearing, land breaking and miscellaneous. Claire Lukey of the farm business management branch in Olds says the directory will benefit both the farmer and custom operators. Farmers will know some of the custom operators in their area and custom operators will benefit from the publicity. The operators listed submitted their names voluntarily and their listing does not indicate a recommendation by Alberta Agriculture. A 1986 directory will be published and operators who want to be listed, including those in the 1985 directory, must contact the farm business management branch by December, 1985.

The *Custom Rates Annual Survey Summary - 1984* publishes the results of the survey of custom and rental rates conducted by Alberta Agriculture each year. This publication is useful in determining the rates others are paying or charging for the listed services: seeding, fertilizer and herbicide application, haying, silage, grain harvesting, tillage, fencing, grain processing, livestock hauling, corral cleaning, land clearing and breaking, machine rental

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New updated custom rates publications (cont'd)

and land rental. The rates are listed according to the six agricultural regions in Alberta and are given as a price range and as the most common prices for 1984. These rates are intended only as a guide for 1985, and are not to be interpreted as the rates you should charge or pay.

Farm Machinery Costs as a Guide to Custom Rates - Spring, 1985 is available for custom operators who want to make sure they are charging enough to cover their costs and for farmers hiring custom operators. The guide calculates the cost for different sized machinery used in major field and livestock operations based on fixed costs (depreciation, investment cost, insurance, housing) and variable costs (fuel, lubrication, labor and repairs). As in previous years, this publication is only intended as a guide to be used along with individual circumstances to determine actual costs.

Copies of these three publications may be obtained from local district agriculturists, the farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1PO, or by writing to the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

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For immediate release

Flea beetle injury on rapeseed

A 1984 experiment conducted by Dr. Helen Liu of the Alberta Environmental Centre at Vegreville, assessed the amount of flea beetle damage rapeseed plants can withstand before it affects yield.

Plant stand, growth and development rates, and yield of rapeseed which had been subjected to simulated flea beetle injury in the seedling, early and mid-vegetative stages were measured.

Dr. Liu found that removing both cotyledon leaves of plants of the cultivar Tobin didn't have any adverse effect on yield. Significant yield reductions of 38 per cent were observed only when all of the leaves continued to be removed into the 4-true-leaf stage. Removing lesser proportions of Tobin leaves, even 90 per cent of the total leaf area by the 6-true-leaf stage, did not reduce yields significantly. Yields of Westar were reduced by 40 per cent when at least 75 per cent of the area of cotyledon leaves was removed shortly after emergence. Repeated removal of at least 75 per cent of the remaining leaf area of Westar into the 4-true-leaf stage decreased yields even further, while removing less than this portion had no significant effect on yields at all.

Delays of less than three days in time to maturity occurred in Tobin where plants had 75 per cent or less of their leaf area removed either in the cotyledon stage or into the 4-true-leaf stage, and 50 per cent or less leaf area removed into the 6-true-leaf stage. Removal of all leaves over the first two-week period of leaf development delayed the time to maturity of Tobin by seven days, and of Westar by 10 days.

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Flea beetle injury on rapeseed (cont'd)

Wherever flea beetle attack is short and confined to the cotyledon stage, only severe leaf-area loss is likely to result in yield losses and delays in development. However, in regions where large proportions of leaves are removed in the early and mid-vegetative stages, yield losses and delays in development may be severe. In this case, the use of long-lasting granular insecticides is recommended and additional insecticidal spraying may be necessary.

Mike Dolinski of Alberta Agriculture's plant industry division suggests farmers consider applying granular insecticide to the outside two or three rounds of the field at seeding time if field edge damage has normally been the problem. This practice places the insecticide where it's most needed and allows the farmer to save the cost of treating the entire field at seeding time.

If the decision is wrong, the farmer can then spray the fields which require treatment at no additional costs than would have occurred compared to treating the entire field at seeding time. Granular application will provide protection for approximately two weeks and under moderate infestation, the edge treatment will solve the problem.

Mr. Dolinski admits the method isn't viable for everyone. It depends on the farmer being vigilant and spraying at the appropriate time.

- 30 -

Contact:

Mike Dolinski
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AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA
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April 15, 1985

For immediate release

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Phone: (403) 427-2121

April 15, 1985

For immediate release

Sugar Beet Pricing Program Announced

LeRoy Fjordbotten, Alberta's minister of agriculture announced an emergency Sugar Beet Pricing Program in Lethbridge, April 1, 1985.

Sugar beet producers and the provincial departments of agriculture in Alberta, Manitoba and Quebec have urged the federal government to establish a uniform national sugar policy to protect the domestic industry at times of disasterous world prices.

Mr. Fjordbotten said that the growers cannot wait any longer for action by the federal government, since they are ready to begin seeding the new crop.

The Alberta government is prepared to give growers $10 per field tonne of sugar beets delivered to the processor for the 1985 crop.

The minister stated that he didn't wish to interfere in the negotiations between the Alberta Sugar Company and the Grower's Marketing Board. The financial assistance to the growers will allow a contract to be negotiated to cover growers costs and still permit competitive pricing by the Sugar Company.

Mr. Fjordbotten explained that Canada is the only developed country that does not have a national sugar policy to provide some level of stability and protection for a local industry. Only about 15 per cent of the sugar traded internationally is in the "free market." Small changes in supply cause large price changes. For the past three years, raw cane sugar on the uncontrolled world market has been selling at less than half the domestic cost of production. Alberta's sugar beet growers cannot be expected to produce in competition with what is really "dumped" surplus imported sugar.

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Sugar Beet Pricing Program Announced (cont'd)

Although the Federal Agricultural Stabilization Act covers sugar beets, the payments are based on a complex formula and are only made after all the refined sugar is sold. This program does not give the needed assurance to the industry in times of severe financial stress. To be helpful a program must be announced before planting, and paid when the crop is harvested.

Mr. Fjordbotten said he hopes Alberta's action will help the sugar beet industry survive until the federal government decides to act.

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Contact:

Jim Armet
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April 15, 1985

For immediate release

Soil at Risk conference

Soil conservation will be the topic of a two-day conference offered at Hanna this spring.

Sponsored by the Hanna Chamber of Commerce, and Alberta Agriculture, the "Soil at Risk" soil conservation conference will be held April 23 and 24, 1985.

"You'll never get a better package of speakers, more qualified to speak on soils, closer to home," says Russel Horvey, conference chairman.

Conference speakers will delve into a number of key soil conservation issues. Here are some of them: H.O. Sparrow, chairman, standing senate committee on agriculture, fisheries and forestry, will talk about Canada's eroding future; Norman Storch, an Alberta farmer, will talk about conservation practices that don't cost much; Pat Rutledge will explain how to make zero tillage work based on his personal farming experiences; and Jim Lore, of Jim Lore & Associates, will discuss the ECA report: maintaining and expanding the agriculture land base in Alberta.

The conference will feature a number of Alberta Agriculture films, including the award winning, *A Matter of Soil.* Working sessions will give participants an opportunity to give direction to the planning committee for follow-up and future activities.

The cost of the conference is $10 with banquet, $5 without banquet.

Anyone interested in attending is encouraged to pre-register by April 19.

Contact the Alberta Agriculture Hanna district office, Box 349, Hanna, Alberta, TOJ 1PO, telephone 854-4451.

- 30 -

Contact:

Russel Horvey
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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

For immediate release

Seed treatment effective against virulent blackleg of canola

Province-wide surveys for a canola fungus disease discovered in Saskatchewan in 1975 have been carried out in Alberta for the past nine years. Virulent blackleg of canola was first discovered in one Alberta field at trace levels in 1983 and at six locations in 1984. Twenty per cent of the plants in two of these fields showed some blackleg infection.

If measures aren't taken to control the spread of the disease in Alberta, gradual build up of the blackleg organism will occur. Eventually, all canola growing areas would be infested, says Dr. Ieuan Evans of Alberta Agriculture's crop protection branch.

In Saskatchewan, where the disease has existed for about 10 years, its spread has been slower than expected. Around 15 per cent of the provincial acreage, mainly around Melfort and Saskatoon is affected. The disease ranges from trace levels to heavy infections where losses of up to 50 per cent of expected yield have occurred in scattered fields.

Since the fungus overwinters on infected canola stubble and is carried on the seed, the first step in controlling it is to obtain seed from areas known to be disease-free.

"To our knowledge seed from within Alberta has never been infested or infected with blackleg," says Dr. Evans.

Secondly, seed treatment with a fungicide or fungicide/insecticide mixture that contains either benomyl or carbathiin will control any seed borne blackleg.

In disease-infested fields, plowing under of infected canola stubble and at least three or four years between canola crops will give good control. Canola stubble infected with the blackleg fungus can produce infectious spores for up to three or four years. Spores are only produced on stubble that lies on the soil surface. Buried stubble does not produce spores and in normal growing seasons will rot in two to three years.

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Seed treatment effective against virulent blackleg of canola (cont'd)

Spores produced on surface stubble can travel up to five miles. But, most infections from fields with infested stubble occur in canola adjacent to fields where infection occurred the previous year. Weed control between canola crops, particularly volunteer canola and wild mustard (a host for blackleg), is essential in preventing disease build-up.

Canadian plant breeders and plant pathologists, have been working on developing blackleg resistant canola for a number of years. They say blackleg resistant lines of canola are available, but it will be about five years before plant breeders can release suitable resistant varieties to growers.

- 30 -

Contact:

Dr. Ieuan R. Evans
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April 15, 1985

For immediate release

Pedigreed seed show winners

Pedigreed seed growers from across western Canada participated in the second annual Northlands Western Pedigreed Seed Show. More than $10,000 worth of prizes and trophies were awarded.

Here is a list of winners:

Hard Red Spring Wheat – Jerry Kubik, Wrentham, won first prize with a sample of Katepwa.

Winter Wheat – Jerry Kubick won first prize with a sample of Norstar.

Durum/Utility/Soft White Wheat – Tony Crooysman, Bow Island, won first prize with a sample of Fielder.

The grand championship and the reserve grand championship in the wheat section were won by Jerry Kubik and Tony Crooysman respectively.

Winter and Spring Rye – Larry Kitz, Two Hills, won first prize with a sample of Muskateer.

Six-Row Barley – David Kaun, Penhold, won first prize with a sample of Bonanza.

Two-Row Barley – Ralph Dueck, Olds, won first prize with a sample of Klages.

The grand championship and the reserve grand championship in the rye and barley section were won by Ralph Dueck and Carl Bergerud of Edgerton respectively.

Oats – Glen Seymour, Stewart Valley, Saskatchewan, won first prize with a sample of Calibre.

The grand Aggregate Cereal Banner was won by Ralph Dueck, Olds.

Canola (B. napus) – Frank Kastelic, Sangudo, won first prize with a sample of Westar.

Canola (B. campestris) – Zwack Seed Farm, Daysland won first prize with a sample of Tobin.

The grand championship and the reserve grand championship in the canola section were won by Frank Kastelic and Zwack Seed Farm respectively.

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Pedigreed seed show winners (cont'd)

Flax – Tony Crooysman won first prize with a sample of McGregor.

The Grand Aggregate Oil Trophy was won by Tony Crooysman.

Pulse Crops – Dale and Deb Heenan, Regina, Saskatchewan, won first prize with a sample of Eston.

Alfalfa – Murray Pask, Atwater, Saskatchewan won first prize with a sample of Glory.

The grand championship and the reserve grand championship in the legume section were by Murray Pask and Steve Merkl of Brooks respectively.

Bromegrass – Maurice Hrushka, Hines Creek, won first prize with a sample of Carlton.

Red Fescue – Gus Dreger, Rycroft, won first prize with a sample of Boreal.

Timothy – Ernie Kvarnberg, Calmar, won first prize with a sample of Richmond.

The grand championship and the reserve grand championship in the forage grasses section were won by Ernie Kvarnberg and Gus Dreger respectively.

The grand Aggregate Forage Trophy was won by Ernie Kvarnberg.

The Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Trophy was won by Peace River Seed Co-op Limited under the management of Darrel Watson.

The Other Seed Plant Aggregate was won by Fraser Seed Farms, Paynton, Saskatchewan.

In the junior section, Natasha Kubik of Wrentham won first prize in the cereal class with a sample of wheat and first prize in the oilseeds class with a sample of Tobin.

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Contact:

Bill Witbeck
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April 18, 1985

For immediate release

Beware of the liability against your farm business

Farmers should be aware that their entire farm could be at stake in the event of a major liability claim, says Harry Warne of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch at Olds.

A new Alberta Agriculture factsheet identifies the different types of liability which may occur on the farm, and what farmers can do to protect themselves.

The major emphasis of the article is employers' liability insurance and workers' compensation coverage. Employee liability protection may be obtained through Workers' Compensation Board coverage or other employee liability policies. This will provide protection against claims for property damage, farm product liability and bodily injury.

The most common policy sold to farmers is the farmers' comprehensive liability insurance policy. It will pay, on your behalf, all sums which you become legally obliged to pay to others (except employees) as a result of an accident causing bodily injury or property damage.

For an in-depth look at the types of liability insurance coverage available, you can obtain copies of *Beware of the Liability Against Your Farm Business, Agdex FS 838-5.* It's available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6, and the farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1PO.

- 30 -

Contact:

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April 18, 1985

For immediate release

4-H highway cleanup

Alberta 4-H members will once again participate in the largest cleanup of the spring. On Saturday, May 4, 4-H'ers will collect about 54,000 bags of garbage from highways and roadsides throughout the province. In case of bad weather, the cleanup will take place the following Saturday.

Bright orange garbage bags will mark the miles that have been cleaned. These, along with orange safety vests worn by the members, should help to alert motorists well in advance. Elizabeth Webster, 4-H provincial personal development specialist, expresses the 4-H branch's concerns for the safety of those participating. She says, "We ask motorists to slow down as they enter a clean-up area. The young people will be concentrating on their task and will need special caution on the part of drivers."

Over the last six years, 4-H members, leaders and parents have cleaned more than 23,000 miles of ditches. Each year, about 550 clubs contract to clean 10 miles of highway each as fund raising for community projects.

Keep a lookout on May 4 for the bright orange, and give the 4-H'ers a smile as you drive by.

- 30 -

Contact:

Elizabeth Webster
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April 18, 1985

For immediate release

New beef herd management method

The Alberta beef producers may soon hear about a new system of managing their herd for more profit. The O'Connor method was introduced by Dr. G.D. Niswender and Dr. J.N. Wiltbank at a beef cow efficiency forum held at Colorado State University last year.

Developed by Dr. Wiltbank, the method was named after a rancher who used most of the ideas in his highly productive herd. In fact, the system organizes the good management practices used by many ranchers and farmers to ensure the best production from their herd.

Here are the five major points in the O'Connor method:

1. Cows are fed to ensure that they are in moderate condition (condition score 2 - Scottish system) at calving
2. Cows are fed to gain weight for the three weeks prior to first breeding and the first three weeks of the breeding season (target condition score 2½ - Scottish system)
3. Calves are removed from the cows for 48 hours at the beginning of the breeding season
4. Cows are bred to fertile bulls
5. The breeding season is limited to 60 days

Ross Gould, of Alberta Agriculture's beef cattle and sheep branch says that although it may be too late to use the first step in the O'Connor method, beef producers may want to consider adopting its last four points to increase profits.

Dr. Niswender described a trial where two commercial herds were compared. One used the O'Connor method while the other used its normal management system. In the O'Connor herd, 80 per cent of the cows were pregnant after the first breeding compared with

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New beef herd management method (cont'd)

50 per cent in the normal herd. Of the O'Connor cows, 95 per cent had been in heat after 25 days in the breeding pasture compared with 59 per cent in the normal herd. Ninety-eight per cent of the O'Connor cows were bred at the end of a 60-day season compared with 91 per cent in the normal herd.

During calving season, 80 per cent of the O'Connor cows had calved in the first 20 days compared with 28 per cent in the normal herd. Ninety-one per cent of O'Connor cows had calved within 40 days compared with 52 per cent in the normal herd. Even after calving, the survival rate of O'Connor calves improved: 92 per cent weaned calves compared with 78 per cent in the normal herd. In the normal herd there was an 11 per cent calf loss from birth to weaning compared to a three per cent loss in the O'Connor calves.

The payoff for the cow-calf operation is when weaned calves are sold. O'Connor calves weighed 488 pounds while the normal calves weighed 460 pounds at weaning. However, when the number of weaned calves was considered in a 100-cow herd the O'Connor herd weaned 44,896 pounds of calf compared to 35,883 pounds for the normal herd, a difference of 9,013 pounds. At current prices of $0.82 per pound (averaging steers and heifers), this represents a difference of $7,390.66.

The system does involve extra costs however. According to Dr. Niswender extra feed, labor and fertility checks on the herd sires cost about $1,542. This still leaves the O'Connor system rancher with a return of $5, 848 more than the usual operation, or over $58 per cow in the herd.

Copies of the complete O'Connor method report are available from Ross Gould, beef cattle and sheep branch, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 St. Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact:

Ross Gould
427-5335

April 18, 1985

For immediate release

Market garden grant available again

If you are a market gardener, you may be eligible for financial assistance under Alberta's Market Garden Development Grant Program. It provides funds to eligible market gardeners of up to $750 per hectare (2.47 acres or 107,640 square feet) of vegetables and/or fruit.

The program was initiated in 1976 to increase market gardening in Alberta by providing assistance to growers in the form of grants to be used for buying seed, fertilizers, gardening equipment, etc.

To be eligible for a grant, a market gardener must grow and market all his produce from a minimum of one hectare. The grant covers all vegetable crops, except potatoes, that are commonly grown in Alberta and raspberry and strawberry plants that are bearing fruit. The vegetables and fruit must be grown under normally acceptable cultural practices and must be sold through a recognized marketing channel.

Since a market gardener is entitled to a grant for a maximum of only two years, anybody who has already received a grant for two years under the Market Garden Development Grant Program is not eligible for a grant this year. Vegetable growers who are eligible for grants must file an application by July 1 with the Alberta Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

Additional information on the Market Garden Development Grant Program and application forms for the grants can be obtained from district agriculturists, the Alberta Horticultural Research Center, Bag Service 200, Brooks, Alberta, TOJ OJO or the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre, R.R. 6, Edmonton, Alberta, T5B 4K3.

- 30 -

Contact:

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Alberta
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For immediate release

Erosion reduces yields

Research results on productivity losses due to soil erosion showed erosion commonly reduced yields for a variety of crops by 40 to 50 per cent.

Results from the study carried out across North America were highlighted at a December symposium held in New Orleans. Here is a summary of the results:

Location	Crop	Yield Reduction	Erosion Conditions
Alberta	Barley	67%	46 cm soil removed
Georgia	Soybean	50%	Severely eroded
Idaho	Soft White Winter Wheat	$14/acre	For each cm of topsoil lost
Idaho	Wheat, Dry Beans, Sweet Corn	Up to 70%	Topsoil depth reduced from 38 cm to 10 cm
	Alfalfa & Barley	Up to 50%	Topsoil depth reduced from 38 cm to 10 cm
	Sugar Beets	Up to 20%	Topsoil depth reduced from 38 cm to 10 cm
Mississippi	Soybean	50%	22.5 cm of topsoil removed
Ontario	Corn	40%	Severely eroded
Washington	Winter Wheat	37%	76 cm topsoil removed
Washington	Winter Wheat	14.7 bu/ac	Topsoil thickness reduced from 60 cm to 15 cm; no restricting subsoil layer
	Winter Wheat	19 bu/ac	Restricting layer present

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Erosion reduces yields (cont'd)

In the Alberta portion of the study, Agriculture Canada scientists, C.W. Lindwall and J.F. Dormaar found that 20 years of cropping with high fertilizer rates did not fully restore productivity to soil that had more than 10 centimetres of topsoil removed. Organic matter and soil structure lost to erosion were not re-developed in the 20 years.

In Kansas, fine eroded particles were found to be more fertile than the soil that remained. These fine particles had 3.1 times more nitrogen, 2.3 times more phosphrous and 1.9 times more organic matter than the original field. The coarse eroded particles had 1.4 to 2.6 times more phosphorus than the original field.

In North Dakota, where the traditional cropping system is chisel-plowed fallow followed by durum, 10 tons of soil loss per acre and less than $30 per acre income is the norm. Alternative crop management involving winter wheat, sunflower, chemical fallow and no-till increased profits by $10 per acre and reduced annual soil loss to less than five tons per acre.

Ron McMullin, Alberta Agriculture's soil and water specialist at Lethbridge confirms that wherever erosion goes uncontrolled, productivity declines for over 20 years. He recommends that farmers roughen up, cover up, or stubble up to stop soil erosion.

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Contact:

Ron McMullin
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April 18, 1985

For immediate release

Alberta peat moss study available

Alberta Agriculture, in cooperation with Alberta Moss Peat Harvesters Association, wishes to announce the completion of a market research study on Alberta peat moss.

The purpose of the study was to identify potential markets in California, the western United States and British Columbia for Alberta peat moss.

Directed by Jack Bell, formerly of Langley Peat, the study primarily covered retail outlets such as garden centres, home improvement centres and other possible users of peat moss.

The first peat moss plants in Alberta were built in 1963. Twenty years later, export sales to the United States reached approximately $9 million.

Peat moss ranked fourth in 1981 exports of primary agricultural products to the United States after live animals, meat and whiskey.

Total employment in the industry averages 160 employees with an annual payroll in excess of $3.2 million.

Information on the market research report on Canadian Sphagnum peat moss is available from Lorraine Rea, Marketing Services, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Copies of this report are available from Gerry Hood, President, Alberta Moss Peat Harvesters Association, P.O. Box 9, Site 9, R.R. 8, Edmonton, Alberta, T5L 4H8.

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Contact:

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April 15, 1985

For immediate release

Receiver-manager appointed to Sexsmith canola crushing plant

On April 9, 1985 LeRoy Fjordbotten, Alberta's minister of agriculture, announced the appointment of a receiver-manager for Northern Alberta Rapeseed Producers Co-operative Ltd. and NARP Processors Ltd. of Sexsmith, Alberta, due to financial circumstances. Price Waterhouse Ltd. was appointed receiver-manager by the Court of Queen's Bench in Alberta and has the authority to carry on the business of the company with the financial backing of the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation.

Mr. Fjordbotten emphasized that continued operation of the canola crushing plant is important to the general economy of the Peace River area. Because the plant provides an essential market alternative to canola producers in that region, the Alberta government will ensure the plant continues to benefit the region.

After the appointment of the receiver-manager, efforts will be made to arrange a sale or a long-term lease of the crushing plant. If no satisfactory sale or lease can be negotiated, the plant will operate until the summer of 1987.

Whether the crushing plant continues to operate beyond that time depends on the willingness of producers to make seed available for crushing. NARP Processors Ltd. has the capacity to crush 200,000 tonnes of seed annually and requires the assurance of seed supplies throughout the year. Canola growers will be asked to supply the seed required to allow the plant to crush to capacity. Increased availability of seed throughout the year will be a major factor in a return to profitable operation.

To ensure producers are paid for seed, the present $8 million bonding arrangement with the Canadian Grain Commission will be increased to $12 million. If the plant is sold or leased, seed delivery sales contracts will be honored.

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Receiver-manager appointed to Sexsmith canola crushing plant (cont'd)

The Alberta government's plan to continue the business until the summer of 1987 will maintain jobs for about 80 employees. It will have a positive effect on employment levels, business activity of associated firms and a wide range of business enterprises throughout the region. In addition, all valid trade accounts in existence at the time of the appointment of the receiver-manager will be honored.

"We are counting on producers to respond favorably to our government demonstration of faith in the future of NARP," Mr. Fjordbotten said.

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Contact:

J. Harold Hanna
679-1301

April 15, 1985

For immediate release

Don't sell your 1984 income loss short

A farmer can turn a 1984 farming loss into a future tax gain if the 1984 tax return is filed by April 30, 1985.

The maximum income-averaging options are available if the tax return is filed on time -- **even if 1984 is a loss year.** These three options are:

Livestock Inventory Provision (LIP)

To be eligible for LIP a farmer must be on the cash basis and have owned cattle, sheep, bees, fur bearing animals, etc. for business purposes on December 31, 1984.

LIP allows any amount up to the market value (other than Basic Herd) of the livestock on hand at year-end to be included in farming income on line 505 of the Farm Tax Return. This artificial inflation of farm income enables all eligible farm losses and personal exemptions to be recouped.

Whatever is added to income on line 505 of the 1984 Farm Return must be included on your 1985 Farm Return as an expense on line 325.

Loss Carry-Back and Carry-Forward

This income averaging method can be used by any farmer in any enterprise.

It allows losses to be carried back to a maximum of three years and forward to a maximum of 10 years. Maximum gain can be obtained from these losses by applying portions of (or all of) the loss against year(s) with positive net income to obtain the most taxable benefit.

On the other hand, farmers with livestock have a greater advantage in that the LIP can be used to recoup any lost personal exemptions in the year of the loss.

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Don't sell your 1984 income loss short (cont'd)

To carry losses back a completed TIA *Request for Loss Carry-Back* must be filed. It is not automatically calculated by Revenue Canada.

Five-Year Block Average

By artificially inflating the income in the year of averaging, the increase in tax payable may be minimal as the additional income is spread over a five-year period. This results in a large carryover of expense into the following year and, therefore, can be very effective if a very high income in the year succeeding the block average period is expected.

To be eligible for this averaging method certain requirements must have been met. These are:

1. The four previous tax returns, within the five-year block, must have been filed by the date necessary if tax had been payable. This date for most farmers is April 30 of each taxation year.
2. The chief source of income must be farming in the five-year period of the block average.
3. Cannot include any year earlier than six years prior to year of averaging.
4. Once done, block averaging cannot be repeated for another five years.
5. Years, within which an amount has been added to or deducted from taxable income via the Forward Averaging Provision, are not eligible for block.
6. Losses arising within three years after a block average cannot be carried back into the block period.
7. To block average a completed T2011 *Election to Average Income* must be filed. It is not automatically calculated by Revenue Canada.

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Don't sell your 1984 income loss short (cont'd)

Example Case

Assume Fred Jones, who is a livestock producer, had a $10,000 loss in 1983. In 1984, he projected his net farm income at $4,000. The market value of his cattle at December 31, 1984 was $50,000. Fred is married and has two children. The personal exemptions totalled $9,000.

Although Mr. Jones would have no taxable income in 1984, he would be advised to add sufficient income, through the LIP (of $7,000), to increase his net income to $11,000. When personal exemptions of $9,000 are subtracted, Fred's taxable income would be $2,000 and would not be taxed. Furthermore, the 1983 $10,000 loss should not be left on the books if Fred has sufficient income on hand. Therefore, the strategy would be to further increase his LIP by $10,000 and apply the 1983 loss to 1984. Mr. Jones will now have a $17,000 LIP deduction in 1985.

His personal exemptions lost in 1983 can also be saved, if 1983 is subsequently used in a Five-Year Block Average.

"Remember," says Alex Ostapiuk of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch at Olds, "tax management is not only knowing income tax strategies but also knowing how to combine these different strategies."

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Contact:

Alex Ostapiuk
556-4235

AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA
MAY 14 1985

April 22, 1985

For immediate release

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April 22, 1985

For immediate release

Alberta farmers to benefit from IBM/University agreement

Alberta Agriculture's participation in a cooperative agreement between IBM Canada Ltd. and the University of Alberta will extend computer education to farm families starting in the fall of 1985.

Under this three-year agreement, IBM Canada Ltd. will donate to the University of Alberta more than $2.2 million in equipment, software and personnel, including more than 160 IBM personal computers. The Government of Alberta, through the Department of Advanced Education, will provide a cash contribution of $431,000 to be used for services in support of the project.

In addition, IBM Canada Ltd. will donate a further 20 transportable personal computers to be used for seminars and "hands-on" training sessions for Alberta farmers. The sessions will complement the eight-lesson homestudy computer course developed by Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch. Local district agriculturists will organize the sessions which will be held in community halls, district offices and other meeting places.

The engineering and rural services division of Alberta Agriculture will provide a van to transport the computers around the province. The farm business management branch in Olds will provide an instructor and technical support for the project, guided by an educational committee comprised of representatives from IBM Canada Ltd., the University of Alberta and Alberta Agriculture.

The project will make use of the computers to teach computer awareness and demonstrate management and production concepts. The workshop curriculum will illustrate the usefulness of computer technology to the management of today's farm businesses.

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Alberta farmers to benefit from IBM/University agreement (cont'd)

IBM equipment and expertise valued at almost $40 million has been donated through 16 different cooperative agreements across Canada since 1982. The agreements focus on ways to improve productivity through the use of computer technology. The benefits of these projects are made available to all interested parties.

For further information call: Alberta Agriculture, J. Wilson Loree, Head, farm business management branch, Olds, Alberta, phone 403-556-4240.

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Contact:

J. Wilson Loree
556-4240

April 22, 1985

For immediate release

Selecting good quality bedding plants

With spring here, home gardeners in Alberta will soon be visiting garden centres to buy bedding plants.

When selecting bedding plants certain things should be considered to ensure good quality, says Mirza Mohyuddin of the Alberta tree nursery and horticultural centre.

Look for plants that are a uniform dark green with no yellow lower leaves. Plants should be compact (as wide as they are tall).

Watch for overgrown plants which tend to fall over on themselves. Some varieties, however, are normally taller, e.g. tall marigolds versus dwarf marigolds. These are usually shipped from outside the province where they've been grown in warmer temperatures. Generally, Alberta-grown crops are very good and do not suffer from this problem.

Mr. Mohyuddin cautions gardeners from buying bedding plants too early. "Don't rush into it," he says, "buy after there is no danger of frost." Exceptions to this are plants like geraniums and begonias which can be kept indoors until they can be planted outside.

When buying tomato plants, again, make sure there are no lower yellow leaves. Buy plants potted in four or six inch pots. Avoid overgrown tomato plants since they tend to be vegetative resulting in less fruit.

- 30 -

Contact:

Mirza Mohyuddin
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For immediate release

Optional method announced for treating advance payments for 1984 taxation year

Revenue Canada Minister Perrin Beatty has announced an optional change in the taxability of certain advance payments received by farmers for the 1984 taxation year.

This change is only applicable for advance payments received under the Advanced Payments for Crops Act or under the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act. These advances on crops stored in a producer's name have been considered as income in the year received, while the repayment of the cash advances usually made in the next year were considered an expense in that year.

Effective January 1, 1984, producers will only be required to report the full proceeds of the sale of their crops in the year the sale actually took place. In other words, the advance can be treated as a loan. The sale will be considered realized and recognized for the full amount of the produce but **only** when the produce is sold.

Under the old method, farmers who have included 1983 cash advances made to them in their 1983 tax return will be allowed to reduce their 1984 farm income by the amount of this advance.

For 1984, farmers will be allowed to use either method of reporting.

For example, if a farmer received a $10,000 cash advance on October of 1984, the payment can be treated as income for the 1984 taxation year or as a type of loan with only interest deductible in the year paid. If this cash advance is treated as income, then a corresponding deduction will be allowed in 1985 when the loan is repaid. On the other hand, if the advance is treated as a loan, then income is reported when the crop is sold. This will usually coincide with the repayment of the loan.

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Optional method announced for treating advance payments for 1984 taxation year (cont'd)

For 1985 and subsequent taxation years, Revenue Canada has not yet decided whether both reporting methods will be allowed or if only the new reporting procedure will be required.

For farmers who have already filed their 1984 tax return, an amendment to it will be allowed by Revenue Canada. If eligible, farmers should recalculate their 1984 return using this new method and request an amendment to their return.

- 30 -

Contact:

Alex Ostapiuk 556-4235 or Merle Good 556-4239

April 22, 1985

For immediate release

1985 sheep survey results

A survey of Alberta sheep producers has been completed by Alberta Agriculture. It was conducted to obtain an indication of producers' market intentions for 1985.

The 39 per cent response to the survey was encouraging, says Michael Adam of Alberta Agriculture's statistics branch. This represented one per cent increase from the 1984 survey.

The results indicate that fat lamb marketings in 1985 will follow traditional trends, reaching a low during the spring and peaking in the summer. It was also determined that total fat lamb marketings in 1985 will likely exceed 1984 levels.

The survey produced information on average herd size and numbers of breeding ewe lambs by region.

Here are some highlights of the survey:

*Except in region 2 where average herd size declined, there was an increase in all other regions, with the greatest increase occurring in region 5.

*Ewe and ewe lamb numbers per farm increased in all regions, except in regions 1 and 2. Overall, breeding herds constituted 70 per cent of total sheep and lambs on farms at January 1, compared to 72 per cent in 1984.

*Projected fat lamb marketings (March through December 1985) were 126 head per farm.

A detailed summary of these and other results can be obtained by contacting the Statistics Branch, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

Michael Adam
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April 22, 1985

For immediate release

Joint ventures with China

Seldom a day goes by without the announcement of a new Chinese contract, technical tie-up or proposed sale or investment. The increased interest of western businessmen in joint ventures has been spurred by the recent relaxation of joint venture regulations by the Chinese government.

Bill Anderson, Alberta Agriculture trade director for Asia, says at present almost everyone believes there are certain business opportunities in China. "However, this is the most complex and esoteric market in the world. When it comes to understanding the nature and limits of those opportunities and the cost of achieving them the western world has barely scratched the surface," he says.

Today's exporters should be aware that China could tighten up trade regulations again in the future. This would create a similar situation to that experienced in 1981-82 when orders were suddenly cut and projects cancelled. Mr. Anderson says this may be a concern of exporters depending on whether they want to simply sell exports or whether they want to set up longer term joint ventures.

Presently, importers and exporters are doing better than investors. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in the first six months of 1984 the value of China's trade rose at an annual rate of six per cent. Japan, the major trading partner, increased exports to China by almost 50 per cent in 1984 to $7 billion while Japan's imports from China were nearly $5 billion.

By comparison, Canada's 1984 exports to China were $1.27 billion with imports from China of $330 million. The trade imbalance narrowed considerably in 1984 as Canadian wheat exports dropped from $917 million in 1983 to $602 million last year.

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Joint ventures with China (cont'd)

Those considering doing business in China should be aware that simply buying foreign goods is not what the Chinese want. Their major objective is for foreigners to set up joint ventures on their soil to bring skills and technology in addition to goods and capital. So far, several agri-food firms, including Beatrice, Sunkist and Remy Martin, have established joint ventures in southern China.

Many problems exist when establishing joint ventures. One such problem is that foreigners find the incentives less attractive than the Chinese consider them to be. For instance, although China has an advantage of cheap labor, its poor infrastructure, and high energy costs and rent offset it.

Another consideration is that the joint venture can last a maximum of 30 years, after which all infrastructure becomes the exclusive property of the Chinese.

Finally, the most difficult problem is remitting foreign exchange. Since all earnings are in local currency, most foreign businessmen feel that the single most important change China could make would be to provide guarantees that it can be converted into foreign exchange and remitted back to Canada, says Mr. Anderson.

Investors should also be aware of the fast pace of change in China. One result of the confusion these changes cause is the growth of Hong Kong's "suitcase companies." These one-person consultancies bridge communication gaps to help simplify business arrangements between foreign and Chinese businessmen. For example, a manager of a proposed joint venture in China may not know how to contact a multinational so he calls his third cousin in Hong Kong who does. "In some cases, suitcase companies can be very useful," says Mr. Anderson, "word-of-mouth" is the best way to determine if the company is reliable or not."

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Joint ventures with China (cont'd)

In agriculture, the Chinese are most likely to find partners in two circumstances: the product produced by the joint venture has a visible offshore market such as a dairy operation in Southern China for export to Hong Kong, or the foreign partner is also the supplier of the services, equipment or product which comprise the foreign exchange component of the project. An example of this would be a manufacturer of equipment for an integrated livestock operation.

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Contact:

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April 22, 1985

For immediate release

How to select a tree

Selecting the right tree for your yard is not a simple task, says Betty Vladicka of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre. Here are some pointers for anyone planning to buy trees this spring.

Location is the first consideration when choosing a tree. Look at the amount of sun, drainage and exposure the tree will get. Then, using the *Alberta Horticultural Guide* select the hardy trees most suitable for that particular location.

Once you have a list of possible trees, visit a garden centre. Consumers, if expecting quality, should be prepared to pay for it. "Most reputable nurseries will stand behind their plant material," says Ms. Vladicka.

When choosing a tree be sure to consider height and spread restrictions of the tree. In 10 or 15 years, the tree could be too large for the spot it's planted in.

If you're considering fruit trees remember that you'll need two different cultivars of the same fruit, either in your yard or in the neighborhood. This is for pollination purposes since fruit trees are self-sterile and won't pollinate themselves.

Examine a tree to determine the kind of growing conditions it was exposed to. The trunk should be tapering and well-branched. If the tree is short and stout with little growth from previous years it was probably grown under stress conditions (i.e. underwatered, underfertilized or crowded).

Winterkill could also be a concern when buying a tree. Check buds for firmness. If a tree hasn't leafed out by mid to late June this probably indicates winterkill, says Ms. Vladika.

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How to select a tree (cont'd)

Ms. Vladicka recommends the *Alberta Horticultural Guide, Agdex 200/01* for anyone who gardens. It contains a wealth of information ranging from selecting plants and trees, to growing tips, to controlling garden pests.

It's available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices and the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

Betty Vladicka
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April 22, 1985

For immediate release

Livestock manifests required when transporting horses

As the summer months approach, horse owners will be transporting their horses to and from rodeos, horse shows and trail rides more frequently. Bob Coleman, Alberta Agriculture's horse specialist in Edmonton reminds horse owners that when doing so they must have livestock manifests to show proof of ownership.

A simple alternative to a livestock manifest is a horse permit. Horse owners can get a permit by calling their local branch inspector who'll come out, check the horse and issue one for $1.

Both the manifest and the permit must be filled out and accompany the horses when travelling. Owners without either of these could be fined up to $50.

Livestock manifests are available from district agriculturists, brand inspectors and the horse industry branch, 9th Floor, O.S. Longman Building, 6909 - 116 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 4P2 or 205, 2003 McKnight Boulevard, Calgary, Alberta, T2E 6L2.

- 30 -

Contact:

Bob Coleman
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April 22, 1985

For immediate release

Make full use of your farm tax returns

Contrary to popular belief, your farm income tax return does not tell you your actual net cash operating income, says Douglas Barlund of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch at Olds.

Net cash operating income is the result of subtracting all cash operating expenses (money out of pocket) from total cash receipts (money into pocket) for the year. It does not include any principal payments on term debts or any charges for depreciation. The objective in determining net cash operating income is to monitor cash movement in and out of business during the year. This excludes any non-cash additions or deductions to the business that you've recorded on your farm tax return. Non-cash transactions include such items as capital cost allowance deductions, and livestock inventory provision.

Although immediate cash demands may have been met for your farm business, consider whether or not a profit was made in 1984. To determine this you'll have to calculate your net farm income.

Net farm income is the difference between the total value of farm production for a fiscal period (normally one year) and the total expenses incurred to produce this income, whether paid or not. To make these calculations keep track of beginning and ending year inventories of crops, livestock and supplies and accounts payable and receivable.

Total value of farm production is a calculation of the total income produced by the farm business during the year, whether sold or not. When this calculation is made, it's necessary to adjust the expenses to also represent the cost of obtaining this production.

One good reason for determining total value of farm production is that many

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Make full use of your farm tax returns (cont'd)

financial indicators are based on gross farm income. These include debt payments, operating expenses and net income, all as a percentage of gross income.

As an example of a financial indicator, annual debt payments of $31,000 to total farm sales of $124,000 is 25 per cent. The same annual debt payments of $31,000 to gross farm income (based on total value of farm production) of $93,000 is 33 per cent. Be aware of the real demands on gross farm income.

For further insight into how to make more effective use of your farm income tax return, pick up a copy of *Make Full Use of your Farm Tax Return, Agdex 837-19* from Alberta Agriculture's district offices, the farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1PO or the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

Douglas E. Barlund
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April 22, 1985

For immediate release

Choosing a sprinkler irrigation system

If you're planning to buy a sprinkler irrigation system in the near future, examine your proposed purchase carefully. This advice comes from Alberta Agriculture's irrigation systems specialist, Larry Spiess.

Mr. Spiess points out that because sprinkler irrigation dealers must offer low prices due to competition, they sometimes have to cut corners. "This doesn't mean there are no good buys around but that bids from competing dealers should be carefully evaluated," he says.

Although one dealer's price may be lower than another's the system's annual operating and maintenance costs could be higher, which would more than offset the saving in capital cost. For example, consider the difference between operating a seven-inch and an eight-inch irrigation mainline. The extra energy required to pump water through the smaller pipe could be much higher.

Before investing in a low pressure pivot consider the soil texture and topography of the field to be irrigated, says Mr. Spiess. There is growing evidence of localized runoff occurring where low pressure machines are used. As a result, more water must be applied to get adequate amounts into the root zone. Under these circumstances, low pressure may not be beneficial and in fact, may reduce net income.

There are many subtle differences between irrigation systems causing cost differences. Mr. Spiess stresses the importance of knowing the pressure rating and the exact dimensions of the various pipelines so systems of equal quality can be compared. For instance, eight-inch PIP (plastic irrigation pipe) has a smaller inside diameter then eight-inch IPS (iron

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Choosing a sprinkler irrigation system (cont'd)

pipe size) pipe. So, although PIP may be cheaper, it results in a higher friction loss.

The same principle holds for pipeline sizes used in center pivots. There are a variety of sizes used, each suitable for a given range of system capacities. "Don't save on the capital cost at the expense of much higher energy bills for the life of the system," says Mr. Spiess.

He also recommends comparing the type of protection used on the pipe and other parts of the machine (galvanized, epoxycoated, special alloys, etc.).

When buying an electric pumping unit, check the type and quality of the switchgear used in the electrical control system. "The cost of the electric controls in most irrigation systems is about the same as the cost of the motor itself, yet the importance of the quality of it is often overlooked," says Mr. Spiess. Ensure all the components are suitable for the horsepower and the current to be used to run the system and that all electrical work on the pumping unit and the center pivot system has been performed in accordance with the provincial electrical code.

The efficiency of the pump should also be considered. It doesn't take long to recover in energy savings the additional amount needed to buy a higher efficiency pump.

Dealer servicing should not be overlooked when purchasing an irrigation system. Since center pivot irrigation systems will probably require some servicing, make certain the firm selling it can and will provide adequate service.

"This is a good time to buy a spinkler irrigation system, but you should know what you are buying before you sign anything," says Mr. Spiess.

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Choosing a sprinkler irrigation system (cont'd)

For help in deciding what type of irrigation system you need or to compare proposals from different firms, contact your nearest Alberta Agriculture irrigation specialist. Their offices are located in Airdrie, Strathmore, Brooks, Vauxhall, Medicine Hat, Taber, Lethbridge and Bow Island.

- 30 -

Contact:

Larry Spiess
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April 22, 1985

For immediate release

District home economist appointed at Hanna

Shirley Myers, the head of Alberta Agriculture's home economics branch, has announced the appointment of Shirley Urquhart as district home economist at Hanna.

Mrs. Urquhart will provide rural residents with a broad range of home economics services with some emphasis on financial management.

Mrs. Urquhart was born and raised in Manitoba and graduated from the University of Manitoba in 1952. She has been a regional home designer with Alberta Agriculture for 17 years.

- 30 -

Contact:

Shirley Urquhart
854-4451

April 22, 1985

For immediate release

District home economist transfers to Drayton Valley

Bev Broks, a district home economist with Alberta Agriculture is transferring from Evansburg to Drayton Valley. Her appointment, which will be effective in mid-April, is announced by Shirley Myers, head of the home economics branch.

Mrs. Broks was raised on a dairy farm near Spirit River, and in 1981 graduated from the University of Alberta with a B.Sc. in home economics majoring in clothing and textiles. She joined Alberta Agriculture as an acting DHE at Sedgewick, and in August 1981 was appointed to Evansburg.

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Contact:

Bev Broks
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April 29, 1985

For immediate release

This Week

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April 29, 1985

For immediate release

Alberta's top 4-H speakers

Left to right: Jill Hueppelesheuser, Tom Knight, Chairman Youth Activities Committee, Edmonton Northlands; Tracy Pfannmuller; Bill Dent, Assistant Deputy Minister, Alberta Agriculture; Darlene Semeniuk

Tracy Pfannmuller of Mayerthorpe is this year's provincial champion 4-H public speaker.

Tracy's two speeches "The Race" and "The Value of Learning another Language" took top honors at the recent 4-H provincial championship at Edmonton Northlands.

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Alberta's top 4-H speakers (cont'd)

More than 5000 4-H members participated in speech activities with Alberta's 546 clubs. The provincial competition is the summit of the competitive side of the program.

Fourteen finalists from rural Alberta competed in the championship speak-off, with Darlene Semeniuk of Myrnam placing second, Jill Hueppelsheuser of Blackfalds placing third.

The speaking championship was jointly sponsored by Edmonton Northlands and Alberta Agriculture. The 4-H club program features 30 different project areas and is open to young people between the ages of 10 and 21.

- 30 -

Contact:

Elizabeth Webster
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April 29, 1985

For immediate release

Pasture at risk

Spring has arrived and along with it the temptation to turn to livestock out on pasture.

Since pastures are bare due to last year's drought, the greatest damage can occur now by grazing too early, says Robert Wroe, Alberta Agriculture's range managment specialist at Lacombe.

The most important factor in producing top yielding pasture is the date at which grazing begins. "Farmers will benefit by delaying grazing this spring," says Mr. Wroe, "for each day a pasture is grazed too early, about three days is lost in the fall."

Pasture use may be delayed by feeding longer. If this isn't possible, consider restricting livestock to an area that can be sacrificed this year. An alternate method is to reduce the stocking rate during the spring season, i.e., using a small number of cattle on a large area in the spring.

This may also be a good time to seed an emergency pasture. The crop could either be harvested or grazed depending on how the year turns out. One acre seeded down to an annual crop will be ready for grazing in six weeks and will feed one animal for a month.

Mr. Wroe recommends oats seeded at two bushels per acre, but fall rye, winter wheat, wheat or barley are also suitable.

- 30 -

Contact:

Robert Wroe
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April 29, 1985

For immediate release

Herbicide spraying tips

There are three main reasons for herbicide failure: inaccurate herbicide application, the wrong herbicide is applied due to incorrectly identified weeds or the herbicide is applied at the wrong stage of weed growth.

Of these, inaccurate application continues to be the number one reason for poor weed control, says Terry Footz, of Alberta Agriculture's crop protection branch.

To help farmers apply herbicides accurately and uniformly, Mr. Footz offers these suggestions:

1. Pump output should be checked to ensure it produces the required volume for spraying and agitation of the spray solution in the tank.
2. Check pressure in the boom to ensure there are no restrictions in the flow to the nozzles.
3. Ensure all nozzles on the boom are the same size and spray angle.
4. Check nozzle spray patterns. Clean or replace nozzle tips that have streaky spray patterns.
5. Check the output from all nozzles on the boom using a calibration cup or some other measuring device. Output from the nozzles should be within five per cent of each other.
6. Glycerine or oil-filled pressure gauges will prevent the gauge indicator from fluttering. The gauge will be easier to read accurately and will **remain** accurate longer.

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Herbicide spraying tips (cont'd)

7. Adjust boom height in the field so that the spray pattern from one nozzle overlaps into the pattern of the adjacent nozzle above the target. The target is the ground for soil applied herbicides and the crop canopy for post-emergent herbicides.

8. Always read and follow label instructions.

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Contact:

Terry Footz
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April 29, 1985

For immediate release

Keeping track of farm debts

Keeping track of how much money you owe and who you owe it to at any given time can be a difficult task.

But, according to Douglas Barlund of the farm business mangement branch at Olds, although keeping track of farm liabilities isn't easy, it's not impossible.

One way to keep track of debts is to get details on each type of loan individually and record them on a single page. Schedule No. 12 of worksheet No. 1 of Alberta Agriculture's Financial Fitness package provides a good one-page summary to record all farm debts.

Gathering the required information may be a simple matter of contacting your creditors. However, knowing what to ask for is important. Alberta Agriculture has developed loan detail cards which can be readily completed by your creditors to provide detailed information about each loan. These cards are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices or the farm business managment branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1PO.

For further information on the benefits of keeping track of farm debts, pick up a copy of *Know Your Farm Liabilities, Agdex 818-27*. It's available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices, the farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1PO or the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

- 30 -

Contact:

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For immediate release

Self-treatment stations for cattle

Insecticide dispensed to cattle using a forced-use self-treatment station produced excellent control of horn flies, a 60 per cent reduction in mosquitos and a 48 per cent reduction in black flies, says Dr. Ali Khan, Alberta Agriculture's pest control specialist who evaluated this new control technique at the Fort Vermilion grazing reserve.

The technique has also shown excellent results at the Pembina Association Pasture and in the County of Thorhild where it was used as a Farming for the Future demonstration.

The technique involves fencing a dugout and installing *pest-doom* back-rubber oilers at the entrance. When cattle walk into the fenced area to get water, they're forced to walk under the oilers and treat themselves.

The chemical treatment is less than half the cost of a single insecticide eartag and farmers will have the option of rotating chemicals each year.

The method controls a broad spectrum of blood-feeding insects with a single treatment. It can be used throughout Alberta in pastures where cattle access to drinking water can be controlled.

Presently, Dr. Khan is also testing new synthetic pyrethroids in a forced-use treatment station for the control of black flies in the Wandering River area and a modified salt-lick insecticide portable station.

For more information on the self-treatment station technique for cattle, contact local district agriculturists, agricultural fieldmen, or regional livestock specialists.

- 30 -

Contact:

Dr. A. Khan
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April 29, 1985

For immediate release

Sprayer clinics offered

Now is a good time for farmers to check their spray equipment and correct any problems before the spray season arrives, says John Van Keulan, district agriculturist at Medicine Hat.

To assist farmers and applicators overhaul and calibrate their spray equipment, Alberta Agriculture is holding sprayer clinics at these southern Alberta locations:

Clearwater	May 7	Clearwater Community Hall
Hilda	May 10	Alberta Transportation Shop
Schuler	May 13 & 14	Alberta Wheat Pool Elevator
Irvine	May 16 & 17	Irvine Complex
Longfellow	May 21	Longfellow Community Hall
Seven Persons	May 23	Seven Persons Community Hall
Medicine Hat	May 24	Cyprus Alfalfa Plant
Bowell	May 27	Les Gunderson's Farm
Elkwater	May 29	Elkwater Colony
Genner	May 28	Alberta Wheat Pool Elevator

Clinics can be attended any time during the day starting at 9 a.m.

Participants will be given a detailed check list indicating the condition of their spray equipment and assistance in correcting any flaws located. Calibration of all nozzles, boom and pump pressures will also be done. Cost for the clinic is $15 per sprayer.

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Contact:

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April 29, 1985

For immediate release

Points to consider when having custom work done this summer

Many farmers will be hiring a custom operator to do custom work on their farm this summer. What they pay will depend upon their relationship with the custom operator and how the negotiations are carried out.

Types of custom operators

There are three basic types of custom operators - the good neighbor, the part-time operator and the full-time operator.

The good neighbor is a farmer who has a sizable farm from which to make his living. He does custom work only for his neighbors, friends or relatives when he has the time or is finished his own work.

The part-time operator is usually a farmer who does not have a large enough farm to justify the amount of equipment he owns. When purchasing his equipment, he plans to do custom work to spread his machinery ownership costs and to generate extra income.

The full-time operator depends on custom work for his livelihood. He must recover all costs and make a profit to stay in business.

Custom charges

The differences in custom rates charged among custom operators reflect to what extent their fixed costs and profits are included. Fixed costs such as housing, insurance, depreciation and investment costs occur daily, regardless of how often the machinery is used. However, the more hours a machine is used, the lower its fixed costs per hour will be.

The good neighbor usually has a complement of machinery to fit his farm size. Since the fixed costs of owning that machinery are covered by his farm, he may not be interested in recovering his custom fixed costs because his farming operation pays for them.

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Points to consider when having custom work done this summer (cont'd)

The part-time custom operator, on the other hand, does custom work to supplement his farm income and reduce his fixed costs. He usually budgets his fixed costs over the total use of his machinery (farm and custom work). When he sets a rate, a proportional share of his fixed costs will usually be charged to the custom rate.

The full-time operator determines his fixed costs on the basis of the number of hours he expects to work each year. He must cover all his fixed costs to stay in business. If he has a heavy work load, his fixed costs per hour on an individual machine may be the lowest of the three types of operators, but he must also account for overhead costs.

However, all three types of custom operators expect their custom rates to cover their variable costs. Variable costs are such things as fuel, lubrication, repairs and labor.

Basis for contract charges

Custom charges are most commonly based on either an hourly rate or on a physical unit rate. Common physical unit rates are: per bushel, per tonne, per acre and per bale.

The advantages of doing custom work on a physical unit rate are:

* The custom operator can benefit from his own efficiency.
* Both parties can better estimate what the job will cost per unit.
* There is less disagreement over the amount of time worked.

The advantages of doing custom work on an hourly rate are:

* Costs are covered if fields are small, badly shaped or terrain is poor.
* There is less disagreement about the size of area covered.
* Moving time can easily be included in the total cost of the job.

The advantages of the physical unit rate are the disadvantages of the hourly rate and vice versa. Which method to use when paying or changing will depend on preference and/or negotiating skills.

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Points to consider when having custom work done this summer (cont'd)

Custom farm agreement

Custom work constitutes a business arrangement, and the agreement should clearly specify the rights and duties of the parties involved and it should preferably be in writing.

Points to consider when formulating an agreement are:

Operation - type and frequency

Timeliness - a schedule stating when work is to commence and when it is to be completed.

Rate schedule - based on physical unit or hour.

Down-time - who is responsible.

Termination - when notice must be given.

Liability - who is responsible for damages to property.

Management - acceptable farming practices are employed.

"Farm Machinery Costs As A Guide To Custom Rates" Agdex 825-4; "Custom Rates Annual Survey Summary" Agdex 825-9; "Custom Farming Agreement" Agdex 817-10 and *"What Is A Fair Charge For Custom Work?" Agdex 825-15* contain additional information on custom rates. They can be obtained from district agriculturists, the farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1PO, or by writing to the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact:

Gerd Andres
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April 29, 1985

For immediate release

District home economist appointed at Cardston

A new district home economist has been appointed to Alberta Agriculture's office at Cardston. Iris J. Armfelt's appointment was announced by Shirley Myers, the head of the home economics branch.

Ms. Armfelt will serve rural residents in the areas of time and financial management, nutrition education, clothing and 4-H.

Ms. Armfelt was born and raised on a mixed farm in Lamont. In 1965 she graduated from the University of Alberta with a B.Sc. in home economics. Ms. Armfelt was a DHE at Grande Prairie from 1965 to 1968 and taught home economics in schools in Alberta and British Columbia for 10 years.

Her appointment to Cardston was effective April 15, 1985.

- 30 -

Contact:

Iris J. Armfelt
653-4848

April 29, 1985

For immediate release

New AADC secretary appointed

J. Harold Hanna, of the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation, has announced the appointment of Douglas Murray as secretary to the board and assistant to the chairman and chief executive officer.

Mr. Murray brings several years of corporate secretarial experience to the position and is actively involved with the Institute of Chartered Secretaries.

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Contact:

J. Harold Hanna
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